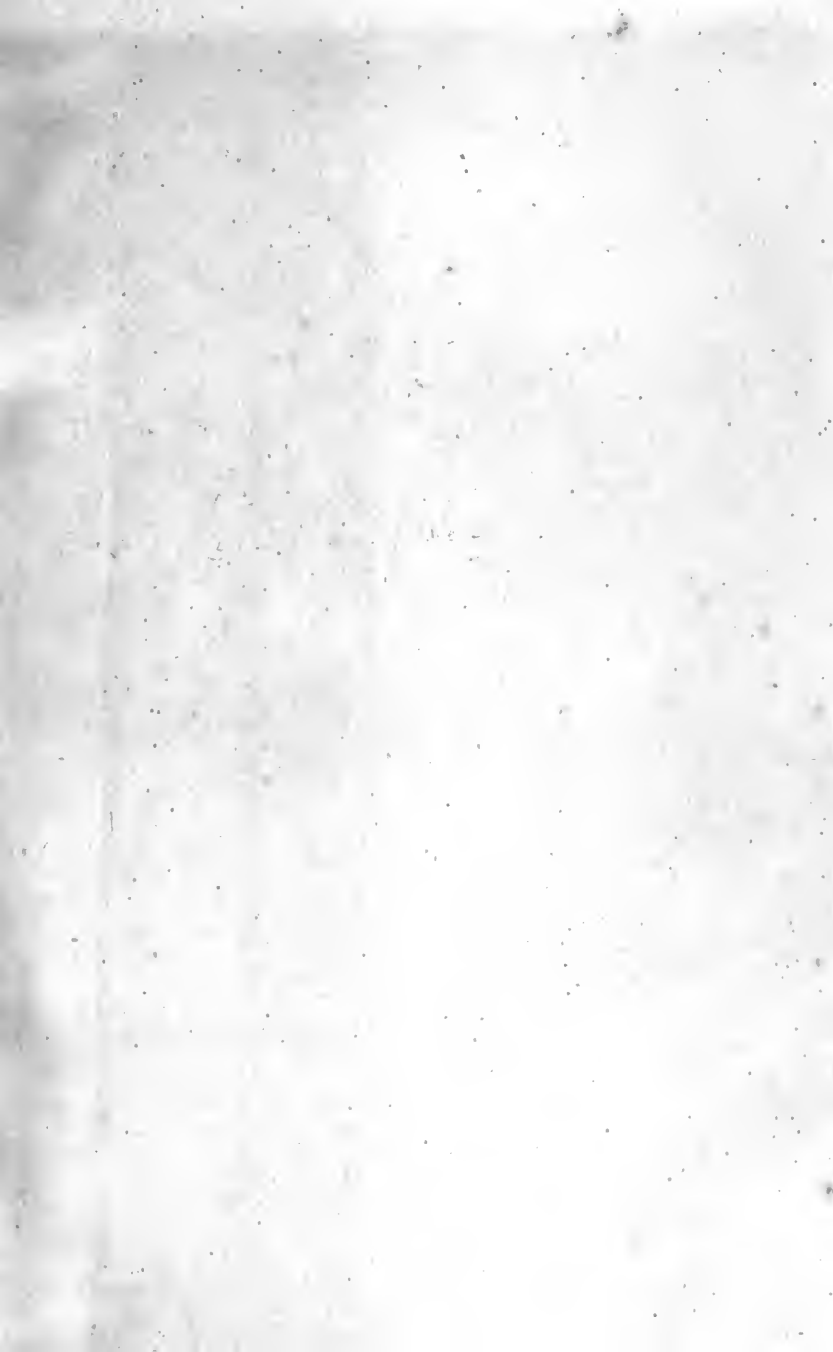





1/6





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

DVORJAŇSKOYE GNJEZDÓ

A NEST OF
HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS

IN SO FAR AS THE LABOUR OF A TRANSLATOR
MAY BE WORTHY OF DEDICATION, THE LABOUR
OF FRANTZ DAVIDOVITCH DAVIS IS DEDICATED
TO RUSSIAN WORKMEN, WITH THE HOPE THAT
IT MAY PROVE USEFUL TO SOME ONE BEGINNING
TO STUDY THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

DUORRAŃSKOYE GNREZDÓ

A NEST OF
HEREDITARY
LEGISLATORS

BY

IVAN S. TURGUENIEFF

*Done into English from the edition of Turguenieff's works
published by MR. GLAZONOFF, St. Petersburg, 1913*

LONDON: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL,
HAMILTON, KENT & CO., LTD.
4 STATIONERS' HALL COURT, E.C.

PRINTED BY
HAZELL, WATSON AND VINEY, LD.,
LONDON AND AYLESBURY.

FOREWORD

WHEN the simplicity and naturalness of the language of Turguenieff are reproduced in English translations of his writings, he will become at least as great a favourite with English readers as "George Eliot" is, to whose art it has been truly said the art of Turguenieff bears a strong resemblance.

The present translator of this masterpiece, this most perfect little picture of a people, is aware of the existence of several translations of this same work ; but he is so sure that several translators will be wanted to express all the poetry, pathos, and humour of the original, that he offers no apology, feels no embarrassment in offering yet another translation. It is possible that,

when he has read existing translations,¹ he may find that very little of his own is necessary ; but he hopes that, if only some of the smaller strokes of the Great Master, some of the fainter lights and shades, have been overlooked by his predecessors, this attempt may be of some assistance to the final interpreter of the writings of I. S. Turguenieff for English readers.

Let the reader take up this little history after laying aside all national prejudice, prepared to abandon himself to the perusal of the life-story of some fellow-creatures who are very nearly related to himself, differing from him in habits and customs so insignificant that the quiet hand of death will instantly brush those differences away. Let him accept the customs of this tender-hearted people as if he were their guest.

¹ Since this was written the translator has glanced through several translations of this work, English and French, and has already corrected some five or six slips made by himself, but he finds it unnecessary to add to or take away from the reasons given above for undertaking this translation.

What may seem to him childlike simplicity of thought and action may come from the manliest hearts. Pride or mistrust causes us to hide our tenderer feelings ; the Russian people have other ways of expressing their pride and mistrust. Readers may find here and there an absence of flow in the language, a peculiarity in the sequence of the phrases. These may be due to the literalness of the translation, to an attempt to enclose within these pages some touch of the oneness peculiar to every soil and its people ; but any failure to express clearly a thought is due to the inexperience or inability of the translator.

To many it may seem to be unnecessary to say anything about the hideousness of the phrase " Art for Art's sake." Nothing great, nothing true, exists for its own sake. Any form of expression, to be pure art—an ideal—must express some truth outside human conventions ; something from outside the human race must have inspired the

thought which Art expresses, and so passes on to others. Art is a vehicle, but a vehicle with something in it to be complete ; it does not preach, but it always teaches ; it thrusts no moral on the pleasure-seeker, any more than the silent mountain does on him who even stamps upon its patient head ; but so long as there is one uneducated¹ human being in the world, Art will have its serious purpose—to excite the ambition to be free, in the breast of the one, and sympathy in the breasts of the millions.

Ivan Sergaievitch Turguenieff was born on October 28, 1818, in Orel, where the regiment of his father happened to be stationed at that time. In 1827 the family went to live in Moscow for the education

¹ The translator is not speaking of what is to-day thought of as education—which tends to increase man's wants. He is speaking of an education to be, which will tend to make man content with very little. It will be foreshadowed by a new science of "waste"—waste of human life and effort. It will foreshadow the gradual abandonment of commerce for personal profit.

of the children, and later Ivan Sergaievitch studied at this university for about a year, when, his elder brother having obtained a commission in the Guards, the family moved to St. Petersburg, and Ivan became a student at the university there. He graduated in 1836, but the teaching of science was not at that time encouraged in Russia, so that young men with a thirst for knowledge and possessing the means to obtain it, upon the termination of their studies at Russian universities, were drawn to the source of serious science—Berlin, which at that time was renowned for its professors. Turguenieff went to Berlin in 1838 to study the philosophy of Hegel and Greek and Latin classical writings. In 1840, after a short stay in Russia and a journey through Italy, he returned to Berlin, already understanding clearly the existence of a dark side of Russian life, and with a feeling of deep pity for the suffering serf, of whose sad lot he had seen so much during his childhood ;

.

and now he knew that he stood at the point whence he must either go by the beaten track, accept silently the unjust conditions of life accepted by his ancestors, or strike out the new path.—“This I did, pushing away from me all and everything, and risking much that was close and dear to my heart.” Upon the death of his mother in 1850 he liberated the serfs on his estate. In 1852 he sat in prison for a month, and upon his release was confined to his own estate, without the right to leave it, for some two and a half years. The ostensible reason for such punishment was the publication in a Moscow paper, with the sanction of the Moscow Censor, of a letter deploring the death of Gogol,¹ the publication of which letter the St. Petersburg Censor had forbidden. The real reason was the dissatisfaction of those in power with the teaching of Turguenieff. All governments built up

¹ Gogol's reputation among Russians to-day may be likened to that of Dickens among Anglo-Saxons.

on the advantages of a privileged few have ever guarded with savage jealousy the ignorance of the people. "A NEST OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS" was published in 1859. Turguenieff died in Bougival, Paris, in 1883.

NOTE.—The translator cannot resist the temptation to add the following little anecdote. Connoisseurs will with delight find in it the charming aroma of pro-consul self-sacrifice and humility. Turguenieff, in his "Literary Memories," tells it thus:

"In connection with this letter, I remember the following: A very highly placed lady, in Petersburg, thought the punishment which I underwent on account of this letter was undeserved, and in any case too severe—harsh. In a word she warmly took my part.

"'But it is possible you do not know,' one present said to her, 'he calls Gogol a great man!'

"'It cannot be.'

"'I assure you.'

"'Ah, then in that case I will say no more. I am sorry, but I understand that one has been obliged to punish him.'"

From "NAKÖNYĚTŽ"

"Then the dying King commanded the crowd of nobles and other satellites that hemmed him in to stand away, to leave him free to think, and to speak with his son, the blind prince : and the crowd did churlishly as he commanded, yet obeyed, having no opportunity to commune one with another. And the King, speaking with painful eagerness, said to his son, 'In this hour all is clear to me. I understand that it will not avail me to say, "Those around me hid the people of whom I took charge from my sight. In their hunger for privilege, form and ceremony, they ate up the whole of my life." That is but to admit that I failed to become the leader of my people, allowing demagogues to rise up on mighty reputations lightly made by providing the ignorant people with paltry palliatives extracted from their own pockets ; whilst I have sat boasting of Divine right. The ignorance of the people is the ineffaceable evidence of my inefficiency. All barriers between the people and knowledge *must . . .*' Here the dying King ceased to be, and the patient people of that distant planet shouted, 'God save the King.'"

A Nest of Hereditary Legislators

CHAPTER I

A BRIGHT spring day of the year 1842 was drawing towards evening: high up in the clear sky small masses of rosy clouds were floating, seeming rather to be sinking into the azure deep than drifting across it. Near the open window of a fine house on the outskirts of the County Town of O—— two women were sitting, one of middle age, the other already old: the younger was known as Marie Dmitrievna Kaleetina, the husband of whom, a former Public Prosecutor and a well-known lawyer in his time, energetic and self-confident, irritable and obstinate, had been dead ten

2 NEST OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS

years. Kaleetin had received a passably good training, finishing his education at a university ; but having been born of the poorer class he early understood the necessity of arranging a path in life for himself and of getting money. Marie Dmitrievna fell in love with him and married him ; he was clever and not ill-favoured, and when he wished it, could be very pleasant.

Marie Dmitrievna (her maiden name was Pestova), whilst yet a child, lost her parents, and lived for some years in Moscow, in an institute for girls ; returning thence she lived on the family estate, which included the village of Pokrovsk, some forty miles from the town of O——, with a maiden aunt and a brother somewhat older than herself. The brother was soon afterwards called to Petersburg on military service, and kept his sister and aunt on a very scant allowance, till his sudden death put an end to his career. Marie Dmitrievna inherited Pokrovsk, but she did not live there long ; the second year after her marriage to Kaleetin, to whom in a few days she had surrendered her heart, the

old estate was exchanged for another, uninteresting and without any pleasure-grounds, but giving a much larger income. At the same time Kaleetin became the owner of the house in the town of O——, and here he settled with his wife, making it their permanent home. There was a large garden attached to the house, and at the bottom of the garden was the open country behind the town; therefore decided Kaleetin, no great lover of the peaceful country, there can be no excuse for dragging ourselves into the country for the summer.

When alone, Marie Dmitrievna often thought with regret of the pleasant old estate, of the merry brook, the broad steppe and the green woods, but she had never contradicted her husband in any way, bowing before his ability and knowledge of the world. When therefore, after fifteen years of such a life, he died leaving her with a son and two daughters, she had already become so accustomed to the house, and town life, that she was quite unable to return to the country. In her youth she had been a fair

4 NEST OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS

and fascinating maid, and fifty years had not robbed her features of all charm, although they had left them somewhat puffed and dimmed ; she was impressionable rather than kind-hearted, and to a ripe age retained her school-girl manners ; she indulged her smaller feelings, easily grew angry, and even cried, if her habits were disregarded, but was caressing and amiable when all her wishes were fulfilled and no one contradicted her. Her house was one of the most agreeable in the town ; her means being ample, not so much by inheritance as by the successful management of her husband.

Both daughters lived with her, and the son was being educated in one of the best institutions for cadets in Petersburg. The elder woman, who was sitting with Marie Dmitrievna at the window, was that same aunt, her father's sister, with whom she spent those few lonely years at Pokrovsk. She was called Martha Timofaievna Pestova, was considered eccentric, had an independent character, said what she thought to all or any, and although her circumstances were of

the narrowest, behaved as though she had thousands of pounds in the bank. The late Kaleetin she could not endure, and immediately after the marriage of her niece departed to her own village, where she passed ten long years, living in the smoky hut of a peasant. Marie Dmitrievna was afraid of her—black-haired and bright-eyed even in old age; small, with a pointed nose, Martha Timofaievna walked quickly, held herself upright, speaking rapidly and clearly with a sharp ringing voice. She always wore a white cap and white bodice.

“Of what thinkest thou?”¹ suddenly asked she of Marie Dmitrievna. “Why sighest thou, mother mine?”

“So,” murmured the other. “What wonderful clouds!”

“Thou art sorry for them, or what is it?”

Marie Dmitrievna did not reply.

¹ In Russia, as in many other countries, “thou” is used to express many different shades of feeling, and its use or non-use is capable of very subtle meaning; generally it expresses great intimacy, or superiority; it may express contempt. A sudden reversion to “you” would express displeasure.

6 NEST OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS

“Why is Gideonovski not here?” continued Martha Timofaievna, her knitting-needles darting in and out quickly (she was knitting a large woollen scarf). “He would have echoed thy sighs, is that not so? Told thee some idiotic lie!”

“How contemptuously you always speak of him! Sergius Petrovitch—is an honourable man.”

“Honourable!” repeated reproachfully the old lady.

“How devoted he was to my late husband,” said Marie Dmitrievna; “even now he cannot remember him without emotion.”

“So I should think! seeing that he dragged him out of the dirt by the ears,” replied Martha Timofaievna, her knitting-needles working in and out still more quickly. “Looks so harmless,” she began again after a pause, “his head quite grey, and but opens his mouth to lie or repeat some scandalous gossip, and he a Privy Councillor! one need only add—son of a priest!”

“Who is without sin, dear aunt? That weakness he certainly has: Sergius Petro-

vitch received no training, does not speak French,—yet in spite of what you say he is a pleasant man.”

“Yes, licks thy hand well. That he does not speak French—what a misfortune! I myself am not strong in the French ‘dialect’; it would be better if he spoke no language—couldn’t lie. There he is, just in time: speak of the wolf one sees his tail,” added Martha Timofaievna, glancing into the street. “There he stalks—thy pleasant man: what a long—in a word, a stork.”

Marie Dmitrievna arranged the coils of her hair, the old lady regarding her with amusement.

“What hast thou? a grey hair! It cannot be, mother mine!¹ Scold thy maid, tell her to use her eyes.”

“Thou art terrible, Auntie,” murmured Marie Dmitrievna, “always,” and she tapped the arm of her chair with her fingers.

“Sergius Petrovitch Gideonovski,” squalled the red-cheeked little footman, opening the door and springing into the room.

¹ An expression used by elderly people.

CHAPTER II

THERE entered a tall man, wearing a speckless black frock-coat, slightly short trousers, grey chamois leather gloves, and two neckerchiefs, a black one over a white. Everything about him proclaimed decency and correctness, beginning with his handsome face and smoothly brushed whiskers, to his boots without heels and without squeak. He bowed, first to the lady of the house, then to Martha Timofaievna, and slowly drawing off his gloves, approached the hand of Marie Dmitrievna, kissed it respectfully once and then again quickly, seated himself without haste in an arm-chair, and with a smile, rubbing lightly together the tips of his fingers, said :

“And Elizabeth Mikaelovna is well?”

“Yes,” answered Marie Dmitrievna ;
“she is in the garden.”

“And Ellen Mikaelovna?”

"Lena is also in the garden. Is there anything new?"

"How could there not be, madam, how could there not be?" replied the visitor, slowly blinking and projecting his lips. "H'm, yes, ah, there is news and somewhat astonishing. Lavretski, Theodore Ivanitch is here."

"Theo?" cried Martha Timofaievna. "Yes, but enough of thee; thou inventest, father mine."

"Not at all, madam; I saw his very self."

"That is still not proof."

"He has grown much stouter," continued Gideonovski, pretending not to have heard the remark of Martha Timofaievna, "shoulders still broader, and his cheeks ruddier."

"Stouter," uttered Martha Timofaievna, and after a pause—"it only seems so: from what could he grow stouter?"

"Yes," replied Gideonovski. "Another in his place would have hesitated to show himself in public."

10 NEST OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS

“And why so?” broke in Martha Timofaievna. “What an absurdity! A human being has come back to his own country! Tell me! whither should he flee? as if he had been guilty of some sin!”

“The husband is always to blame, madam, I make bold to propose, when the wife misbehaves herself.”

“And thou, dear sir, thyself unmarried, for that reason speakest?”

Gideonovski was compelled to smile.

“Allow me to be inquisitive,” he asked after a short silence: “for whom is that nice scarf intended?”

Martha Timofaievna threw a swift glance at Gideonovski.

“It is intended for that one who never gossips, is not cunning and does not invent, if only there be such a person in the world. Theo I know well; he spoilt his wife with indulgence, in that lies his only sin; yes, and he married for love, and out of these love-matches nothing but worthless trouble ever comes,” added the old lady, glancing sidewise at her niece and rising.

"And now, my dear sir, thou art free to sharpen thy teeth on whom it pleases thee, even on me. I am going, I shall be out of the way," and Martha Timofaievna left the room.

"There! she is always the same," murmured Marie Dmitrievna, following her aunt with her eyes, "always."

"Her age—what can be done?" remarked Gideonovski; "and she was pleased to say 'Who is not cunning,' and who to-day is not cunning, our century being such as it is? A friend of mine, a most respectable man, and I assure you of no mean rank, says that to-day even a fowl approaches a grain of corn with cunning; everything is spying on something, making ready as it were to approach sidewise. I have but to glance at you, dear madam, to feel how truly angelic is your character; indulge me, give me your snow-white hand."

Marie Dmitrievna, smiling faintly, stretched out to Gideonovski her dimpled hand, with its five spreading fingers. He pressed it with his lips; she drew her chair towards

him and bending slightly, asked in a low voice, "So you did see him? and he really did look well and jolly?"

"Quite cheerful," replied Gideonovski in a whisper.

"You did not hear where his wife is now?"

"Till recently in Paris; now it is said she has alighted in Italy.

"Is it not terrible—the situation of Theodore? I do not know how he bears it; misfortunes happen to every one—but his, one can say, has been bruited over all Europe." Gideonovski sighed. "Yes, yes, they say she has become intimate even with actors and pianists, and as they express it, with lions and wild beasts; lost to all sense of shame."

"Very, very sad," murmured Marie Dmitrievna; "he is by birth, as you know, Sergius Petrovitch, my cousin."

"Certainly, certainly. How should I not know what concerns your family?—unthinkable."

"Will he come to see us—what do you think?"

“One must suppose it, although it is said that he is preparing to go to his estate.”

Marie Dmitrievna lifted her eyes heavenwards. “Ah, Sergius Petrovitch, Sergius Petrovitch, how important it is to us women to be ever watchful!”

“There are women and women, Marie Dmitrievna, there are unhappily such—of unsteady character,—ah, and age; again, principles, uninspired since childhood (Sergius Petrovitch drew from his pocket a folded blue handkerchief and commenced to unfold it)—such women certainly exist (Sergius Petrovitch carried the corner of his handkerchief first to one eye then to the other)—but generally speaking, if one may judge, that is—there is more dust than usual in town,” concluded he.

“Maman, Maman,” cried a pretty girl of eleven, running into the room, “Vladimir Nikolaiavitch is here on horseback.”

Marie Dmitrievna rose from her chair, Sergius Petrovitch also stood up, and bowed.

“Ellen Mikaelovna our humble respects,” said he, and going decently into a corner

of the room, he blew his long and regular nose.

“What a beautiful horse he has!” continued the girl; “he was at the wicket gate but now, and told us and Leeza that he would ride round to the front door.”

The clatter of a horse’s hoofs was heard, and the rider, a well-made figure, on a handsome bay horse, appeared in the street, staying his horse before the open window.

CHAPTER III

“ **H**OW do you do, Marie Dmitrievna ? ” called the rider in a clear and pleasant voice. “ How does my new purchase please you ? ”

Marie Dmitrievna approached the window.

“ How are you, Vladimir ? O what a beautiful horse ! from whom did you buy it ? ”

“ From the army agent, but the robber got the better of me. ”

“ What is its name ? ”

“ Orlando, a senseless name ; I mean to give it a better one. Steady, boy—steady, you restive creature ! ”

The horse snorted, pawed the ground with its foot, and shook its foaming mouth.

“ Lena, stroke it ; do not be afraid. ”

The girl put out her hand through the open window, but Orlando suddenly reared and sprang aside ; the rider, without losing

16 NEST OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS

control, gripped the horse with his legs, struck him across the neck with his switch, and notwithstanding the unwillingness of Orlando brought him again up to the window.

"Take care—take care," repeated Marie Dmitrievna.

"Lenotchka, stroke him," replied the rider ;
"I cannot allow him to have his own way."

The girl again stretched forth her hand, and timidly touched the quivering nostrils of Orlando, who, trembling with impatience, unceasingly champed his bit.

"Bravo!" cried Marie Dmitrievna ; "and now dismount and come in."

The rider skilfully turned the horse, touched it with the spur, and with a short gallop down the street rode into the courtyard. A few minutes later, flourishing his whip, he entered the drawing-room from the hall, and at the same moment there appeared in the other doorway the tall, well-made figure of a young black-haired girl of nineteen years—Leeza, the elder daughter of Marie Dmitrievna.

CHAPTER IV

THE young man, whose acquaintance the reader has just made, was named Vladimir Nikolaiavitch Panshin ; he was in the Civil Service in Petersburg, being employed on special missions by the Home Secretary. He came to the town of O—— to fulfil a temporary commission under the direction of the Governor, General Zonnenberg, to whom he was distantly related. The father of Panshin, a retired captain of cavalry, and a well-known gambler, a man with gentle eyes, a dissipated countenance, and a nervous twitch of the lips, haunted aristocratic resorts all his life, visiting the English club in Petersburg and Moscow, and passing for a sharp, not very reliable, yet likable and good-natured fellow. Notwithstanding his dexterity, he constantly found himself on the verge of beggary, and left his only son a small and tangled fortune. On

18 NEST OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS

the other hand, he, in his own way, was anxious about the education of the lad ; who spoke French fluently, English well, and German badly, this being as it ought to be, well-bred people considering it shameful to speak German correctly ; but to interject a German proverb, on rare, and generally amusing occasions, was permitted. "*C'est même très chic*," as a Petersburg Parisian would say ; Vladimir Nikolaiavitch at the age of fifteen could enter any drawing-room without embarrassment, turn easily and pleasantly about, and leave it at the right moment. His father procured for him many acquaintances ; shuffling the cards between two rubbers, or after a successful slam, the elder Panshin did not miss the chance to say a word concerning "Volodka" to any important person with whom he might be playing.

For his own part, Vladimir Nikolaiavitch when he entered the University, which he left after taking a degree, made the acquaintance of several aristocratic young men, gaining access to the best houses.

NEST OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS 19

Everywhere he was received willingly, he was far from ill-favoured, with pleasant manners; amusing, and always in good health, ready for anything: where necessary—respectful, where possible—insolent; an excellent comrade, a charming fellow. The sacred garden lay open before him, and Panshin soon found out the secret of worldly knowledge; he knew how to convince himself of the importance of showing real deference towards its regulations. He knew how, with half-serious importance, to occupy himself with an absurdity, and how to make it appear that he considered everything important for the sake of the absurdity. He danced perfectly, and dressed as an Englishman; and he soon passed for one of the pleasantest and most accomplished young men in Petersburg. Panshin was, in fact, very dexterous—not less so than his father, but he was also very gifted, in everything he succeeded: sang nicely, sketched boldly, wrote verses, and was an excellent actor; and although but twenty-eight years old, he was already

20 NEST OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS

a gentleman of the bed-chamber, and of no inconsiderable rank in the Service.

He firmly believed in himself, in his intelligence and sagacity, and went ahead boldly and gaily, all sail spread, life's current flowing like oil. He took it for granted that he pleased everybody, old and young, and imagined that he understood human beings, especially women, though he but knew well their ordinary, daily weaknesses.

As one influenced by beautiful things he felt within himself hot impulses and enthusiasms, and consequently allowed himself many liberties, made the acquaintance of many belonging to the underworld, and led a gay life without a scruple. But in his soul he was cold and cunning, and even in moments of feverish dissipation his intelligent brown eyes were always—like sentinels—watching; this bold, this loose young man, never forgot himself, never quite let himself go. To his credit one must add, that he never boasted of his conquests.

Upon his arrival in O—— he at once became a visitor at the house of Marie Dmitrievna, and quickly made himself quite at home there, she being infatuated with him.

Panshin bowed pleasantly to all in the room, shook hands with Marie Dmitrievna and Leeza, touched lightly the shoulder of Gideonovski, and turning on his heel caught Lena, and holding her head between his hands, kissed her on the forehead.

“You are not afraid to ride so vicious a horse?” asked Marie Dmitrievna.

“Do not say so—Orlando is extremely quiet; but I will tell you of what I am afraid. I fear to play ‘Preference’ with Sergius Petrovitch; yesterday he out-played me hopelessly.”

Gideonovski laughed cringingly; he sought the good opinion of this young and brilliant official from St. Petersburg, the favourite of the Governor. In his conversations with Marie Dmitrievna he frequently spoke of the remarkable abilities of Panshin, and this is how he reasoned, How is it

22 NEST OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS

possible not to praise a young man who succeeds in the highest circles, and without the least pride goes through his duties in an exemplary manner? Even in Petersburg, Panshin was considered to be an active official: under his hands work "boiled"; he spoke of it humorously as becomes a man of the world, finding no particular meaning in it, but he was a worker, knowing that chiefs like such subordinates. He himself did not doubt his ability to become in time a minister if he wished it.

"You are pleased to say that I outplayed you," said Gideonovski, "but who won twenty-five roubles from me last week, and again——"

"Rascal, rascal," broke in Panshin flatteringly, but with a slightly contemptuous carelessness, and paying no further attention to him approached Leeza.

"I was unable to find the Oberon Overture here," said he. "Bailina was only boasting when she said she had all classical music; in reality she has only polkas and

waltzes, nothing more ; but I have already written to Moscow, and in a week you shall have the overture. Before I forget it," continued he, " I must tell you I composed yesterday a new song, the words are also mine ; if you wish it I will sing it to you. I do not know whether it is worth anything or not. Bailina found it very pleasing, but her opinion is of no value ; I wish to have yours, but I think perhaps it will be better after——"

" Why after ?" broke in Marie Dmitrievna ;
 " why not now ? "

" Your lightest wish is law, madam," replied Panshin, with his bright and pleasing smile, which came and went suddenly. With his knee he put into position the music-stool, sat down at the piano and striking a few chords, sang, pronouncing each word distinctly, the following romance :

"The moon floats high above the earth,
 pale clouds beyond,
 Yet from such height controls the impatient sea,
 with magic wand.
 My soul, a sea, confesses thee
 its moon.

24 NEST OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS

O'erwhelmed by flood of joy, or grief,
by thee alone.

Tho' with love's anguish, anguish of hopeless hope,
my soul is full,

How sad a load,—thou art unconscious still
as that pale moon."

Panshin sang the second couplet with special emphasis and power, and in the stormy accompaniment one heard the overwhelming flood, and after the words, "How sad a load," he sighed faintly, lowering eyes and voice—morendo.

When he had finished, Leeza hummed the motif; Marie Dmitrievna said, "Charming;" and Gideonovski even cried "Enchanting—the poetry and the melody equally enchanting;" Lena with childish homage gazed up at the singer. To all those present the composition of the young dilettante had given great pleasure; but behind the door leading to the hall, having just arrived, stood a man already old, to whom, judging by the expression on his downturned face and by the movement of his shoulders, the romance of Panshin, although so charming,

had given no pleasure. Waiting a little and flicking the dust from his boots with a thick pocket-handkerchief, this man suddenly half-closed his eyes, pressed together sourly his lips, bent lower his already stooping shoulders, and slowly entered the drawing-room.

"Ah, Christopher Theodoritch, how do you do?" cried Panshin, before any one else could speak, springing quickly from the stool. "I did not suspect that you were here, or I could not have had the courage to sing my romance. I know you are no lover of light music."

"I did not hear it," said the man who had just entered; he spoke with a bad accent, and after bowing to every one, stood awkwardly in the middle of the room.

"You have come, Monsieur Lemm," said Marië Dmitrievna, "to give Leeza a music lesson?"

"No, not to Elizabeth Mikaelovna, but to Ellen Mikaelovna."

"Well, well, that is capital. Lena, run away upstairs with Monsieur Lemm."

The old man was following the girl, when

Panshin stopped him and said, "Do not go away after the lesson, Christopher Theodoritch ; with Elizabeth Mikaelovna, we will play the Beethoven Sonata for four hands."

The old man muttered something beneath his breath, but Panshin continued, speaking German with a very bad accent : " Elizabeth Mikaelovna showed me the sacred cantata which you composed. A beautiful thing ! Please do not think I do not know how to appreciate serious music ; I do ; it is sometimes wearisome, but on that account very useful."

The blood rushed to the old man's face, even to his ears ; he threw a side glance at Leeza, and hastily quitted the room.

Marie Dmitrievna asked Panshin to sing again his song, but he stated that he did not wish to offend the ears of the highly trained German, and suggested to Leeza that they should play the Sonata of Beethoven. Then Marie Dmitrievna sighed and proposed that she with Gideonovski should go into the garden ; " I want," she said,

“again to speak with you and to ask your advice about poor Theodore.”

Gideonovski scraped and bowed, with two fingers took his hat, with the gloves laid accurately in the brim, and quitted the room with Marie Dmitrievna.

In the room there remained but Panshin and Leeza ; she found and opened the Sonata ; then silently they both sat down at the piano, whilst from overhead came the faint sounds of scales, executed by the uncertain little fingers of Lena.

CHAPTER V

CHRISTOPHER THEODORE GOTLIEB-
LEMM was born in the year 1786 in the Kingdom of Saxony, in the town of Chemnitz, the child of two poor musicians. The father played the cornet, the mother the harp, and already at the age of five he himself practised on three different instruments. At the age of eight he was left an orphan, and when ten years old, with the aid of music, began to earn for himself a crust of bread. For many years he led a wandering life, playing in all kinds of places, in public houses, at fairs, peasant weddings, and balls, and at last obtaining a place in an orchestra, moved higher and higher till he reached the position of conductor. Although himself not a good performer, he knew music to its roots. When he was twenty-eight years old he emigrated to Russia, having been engaged

by an important nobleman, who maintained an orchestra for ostentation, himself detesting music. Lemm lived with him for seven years as the conductor of his orchestra, and with his pockets as empty as when he came, he went away ; the nobleman having quarrelled with him offered to give Lemm his note of hand for the amount of his unpaid wages, but finally refused to give him even this, allowing him to go away penniless. He was advised to return to Saxony, but he did not want to go home from Russia, a beggar—from the great Russia, that gold mine for artists—and he decided to remain, to tempt fortune once more.

For twenty years the poor German pursued fortune, resided with different noble employers, both in Moscow and other important towns ; silently enduring much—the direst poverty—struggling as a fish on ice. But the thought of returning to his native land had not forsaken him, even in his most hopeless moments ; this dream, and this alone, was his one encouragement to struggle on. But fate was unwilling to

gladden the heart of poor Lemm. At the age of fifty, ill and awaiting decay, he buried himself in the town of O——, supporting barely his miserable existence by giving lessons, and there remained for ever, having already lost every hope of leaving the land, the very atmosphere of which had become so hateful to him.

The outward form of Lemm did little to prepossess any one in his favour. He was short and bent, his shoulder-blades stood out crookedly, his stomach drawn up; large flat feet, pale blue nails on the ends of the stiff, unbending, sinewy fingers of his red hands. A wrinkled face with hollow cheeks, and compressed lips, constantly moving as if he were chewing something, which, with his usual silence, produced an almost sinister impression; his grey hair hung in little tufts over his rather low forehead, and like freshly molten charcoal glowed his small penetrating eyes. He walked awkwardly, throwing about with every step his unyielding body. Sometimes his movements brought to mind the awkward attempts of an owl in a cage

to look formidable, when it feels that some one is looking at it whom it can hardly see with its immense, sleepy, yellow, blinking eyes. Ageless inflexible grief had placed upon the poor musician its ineffaceable seal, and had twisted and defaced his at no time handsome figure. Yet, to those whose judgment did not yield to first impressions, there was something kind and honest, something unusual, to be found in this half-shattered being. A worshipper of Bach and Handel, skilful in what he professed, gifted with a lively imagination, and with that boldness of thought attained by the German race alone, Lemm in other times—who can tell?—might have become one in the ranks of the great composers of his native land, had life befallen him otherwise; but the star under which he was born was not for him a fortunate one. In the course of his life he had composed much, without the satisfaction of being able to publish a single one of his compositions. He knew not how to set about gaining patrons as it ought to be done, bowing here, kneeling there;

32 NEST OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS

once, long, long ago, a friend and admirer of his, also a German and also poor, at his own expense published two of Lemm's sonatas, but they remained untouched in the cellars of the publishers ; silently and without trace they vanished, thrown in the night into the river ; and at last Lemm shrugged his shoulders and gave it up. Through it all, each year claimed its own and Lemm shrank and hardened as his fingers stiffened.

With an old cook, taken from the work-house, Lemm (he never married) lived alone in O——, in a small cottage not far from the house of Marie Dmitrievna ; he walked much, read the Bible, a collection of Protestant psalms, and Shakespeare (Schlegel's translation). He had long since given up composing, but Leeza, his best pupil, had succeeded in rousing him, and for her he composed the cantata about which Panshin had spoken. The words of this cantata were borrowed by him from his collection of psalms, with a few verses added by himself, and it was sung by two choirs—a choir of happy ones, and a choir of unhappy

ones—both choirs joining their voices peacefully, to sing together the last verse: “Gracious God, pardon us sinners, burn out of us every selfish thought and earthly desire.” . . . On the cover of the manuscript was written with extreme care, as if engraved, “*Only the just are innocent.*” “Sacred Cantata composed for, and dedicated to, the young lady Elizabeth Kaleetina, my favourite pupil, by her teacher C. T. G. Lemm.” The words “only the just are innocent” and “Elizabeth Kaleetina” being set in a ring of sunbeams, underneath was added, “*For you alone.*” And that is why the blood rushed to Lemm’s face, and why he glanced at Leeza ; he was deeply distressed when Panshin spoke in his presence about the Cantata.

CHAPTER VI

PANSHIN struck the first chords of the Sonata, loudly and with decision (he was playing the 2nd hand), yet Leeza sat motionless. He stopped and looked at her; her eyes, which expressed displeasure, were fixed upon him, no smile upon her lips, the whole expression of her face serious, almost sad.

“What is it?” asked he.

“Why did you not keep your word?” she said. “I showed you the Cantata of Christopher Theodoritch, with the understanding that you did not speak to him about it.”

“I am to blame, Elizabeth Mikaelovna. I could not help it.”

“You offended him and me also; now he will put no trust even in me.”

“What would you have me do, Elizabeth

Mikaelovna? The sight of the German upsets me—sets me wishing to tease him.”

“What are you saying, Vladimir Nikolaievitch? This German, a poor, lonely, crushed being, and you are not sorry for him! You want to tease him!”

Panshin was confused.

“You are just, Elizabeth Mikaelovna,” he murmured; “I have done wrong—my everlasting thoughtlessness! No, do not contradict me: I know myself too well; my thoughtlessness has led me into many evils—I owe to it my reputation for selfishness.

Panshin paused. No matter what the subject of a conversation, it generally, with him, became personal, he speaking about himself, doing it somehow nicely, gently, and heartily, so that it seemed unavoidable.

“Even here in your home,” continued he, “your mother certainly is kindly disposed towards me—she is so kind-hearted—and of your opinion of me I am ignorant, but your aunt dislikes me deeply; I must have offended her with some thoughtless, silly word. You know she does not like me?”

36 NEST OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS

“Yes,” said Leeza, hesitating slightly ; “you do not please her.”

Panshin's fingers ran quickly over the keys, and a scarcely noticeable smile flickered on his lips. “And you,” murmured he, “to you also I appear an egoist?”

“I but slightly know you yet,” replied Leeza. “I do not think you are selfish ; on the contrary, I am obliged to feel grateful to you for——”

“I know—I know what you would say,” interrupted Panshin, and again ran his fingers over the keys : “for the music and books I have brought you, for the poor sketches with which I have adorned your album, and such-like reasons. I might do all this and yet be an egoist. I am bold enough to think that you do not grow weary when with me, and that you do not think of me as a bad man ; yet, after all, you think that I—how shall it be said ?—as a wit, would spare neither father nor friend ?”

“You are careless and forgetful, like all worldly people,” murmured Leeza ; “in that all is included.”

Panshin frowned slightly.

"Enough," said he. "We will talk no more of me; we will play our sonata. Yet one thing I beseech you," continued he, smoothing with his hand the sheet of music on the stand: "think of me what you will, call me even egoist—so be it—but do not call me a worldly man; to be so named is unbearable. Anch' io sono pittore—I also am an artist, though a poor one—and this, particularly this, that I am a bad artist, I will prove to you at once. Shall we begin?"

"We will begin, if you wish," said Leeza.

The first adagio was played successfully, although Panshin made several mistakes. His own music and pieces he had learnt, he played nicely; but read music badly; thus the second part of the sonata—a rather fast allegro—was a failure. At the twentieth measure Panshin, being some two measures behind, gave it up, and with a laugh pushed back his stool.

"No," cried he, "I cannot play to-day. 'Tis well that Lemm did not hear us; he would have had a fit."

Leeza stood up, closed the piano, and turned to Panshin.

“What shall we do?” she asked.

“I recognise you in that question; it is impossible to you to sit with your arms crossed. What shall it be? If you will, let us sketch whilst there is yet sufficient light. Perhaps another Muse—the Muse of painting—how was she called?—I have forgotten—will regard me more favourably. Where is your album? That reminds me; my unfinished landscape is there.”

Leeza went into another room for the album, and Panshin, remaining alone, took from his pocket a batiste handkerchief, polished his nails, and gazed, as it were squinted, at his hand; he had beautiful, white hands: and on the first finger of the left hand he wore a golden snake ring. Leeza returned; Panshin seated himself at the window and opened the album.

“Ho! ho!” cried he; “I see you have begun to sketch my landscape—and excellently—very good; just here only—give me please the pencil—the shadows not quite

strong enough, look," and Panshin made a few long bold strokes. He constantly drew this one landscape—in the foreground some large gnarled trees, with rolling prairie beyond, and a background of toothed mountains. Leeza, looking over his shoulder, watched his work.

"In drawing, yes, in life generally," said Panshin, bending his head to the right, then to the left, "lightness and boldness are of first importance."

At this moment Lemm came into the room, bowed stiffly, and wished to leave; but Panshin threw to one side the album and pencil and put himself in the way.

"Where are you going, kind Christopher Theodoritch? Is it possible you think of going without first drinking tea?"

"I am going home," muttered Lemm in a gloomy voice. "Head aches."

"Oh, that is nothing. Do not go; we will have a dispute over Shakespeare."

"Head aches," repeated the old man.

"We undertook, without you, a sonata of Beethoven," continued Panshin pleasantly,

40 NEST OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS

putting his arm round the old man's waist and smiling brightly ; " but it did not go exactly as it ought to have gone. I—imagine it—could only strike alternate notes correctly."

" You would have done better to sing again your romance," replied Lemm ; and putting the arm of Panshin away from him, left the room.

Leeza hurried after him ; she caught him on the threshold.

" Christopher Theodoritch, listen to me," said she to him, speaking German, accompanying him towards the gate, across the short green grass ; " I have done you a wrong—pardon me."

Lemm said nothing.

" I showed to Vladimir Nikolaivitch your Cantata, feeling sure that he would feel the beauty of it, and it really did give him much pleasure."

Lemm stopped.

" That does not matter," said he, speaking Russian ; then adding in his own native tongue, " But he is unable to understand

anything. How is it you do not see this? He is a dilettante. What more can be said?"

"You are unjust," replied Leeza; "he understands everything, and can himself do almost anything."

"Yes, all second class, cheap goods, scamped work. You are pleased with this and with him, and with that he is content. Let us say, 'Bravo.' I am not angry, the Cantata and I—we are both old fools. I have been a little put to shame, but that is nothing."

"Pardon me, Christopher Theodoritch," said Leeza again.

"It is nothing, nothing," repeated he again; "you are a kind girl. But here is some one coming to call—good-bye; you are a very kind girl."

Lemm with hasty steps moved towards the gateway, through which was coming a gentleman, a stranger to him, wearing a grey overcoat, and a straw hat with a broad brim, to whom he bowed politely (he bowed to all the fresh faces in the town of O——

turning away in the street from those with whom he was acquainted, this being a rule he had long since made for himself), and passing on, disappeared. The stranger with surprise turned and looked at him, then looking at Leeza, walked towards her.

CHAPTER VII

“**Y**OU do not know me?” he asked, raising his hat; “but I know you, in spite of the eight years which have passed since last I saw you. You were then a child. I am Lavretski. Your mother is at home? Can I see her?”

“Mother will be very glad,” replied Leeza; “she heard of your arrival.”

“You, I seem to remember, are called Elizabeth, is it not so?” asked Lavretski, mounting the steps to the front door.

“Yes.”

“I remember you well; you had then such a look as one does not forget. I used to bring you sweets.”

Leeza blushed, and thought, “How strange he is!”

Lavretski remained for a minute in the hall, Leeza passed on into the drawing-room, whence came the voice and laugh of

Panshin. He was telling some tale of the town to Marie Dmitrievna and Gideonovski, who had already returned from the garden, laughing loudly himself at that which he was telling.

At the name of Lavretski, Marie Dmitrievna was quite alarmed, became pale, then went forward to meet him.

"How are you? how do you do, my dear cousin?" cried she in a strained and almost tearful voice. "How glad I am to see you!"

"How do you do, my kind cousin?" replied Lavretski, grasping warmly her outstretched hand. "How are you?"

"Be seated, be seated, my dear Theodore Ivanitch. Oh! how glad I am. Allow me, in the first place, to present to you my daughter Leeza——"

"I have already recommended myself to Elizabeth Mikaelovna," interrupted Lavretski.

"Mosieu Panshin . . . Sergius Petrovitch Gideonovski. Now do be seated. I look at you and do not believe my eyes; how are you?"

"As it may please you to see, flourishing ;

and you, cousin, none has cast an evil eye upon you, you have not grown thinner during these eight years.

"Only to think what a long time it is since we met!" wonderingly murmured Marie Dmitrievna. "Whence have you come now? Where did you leave—that is, I wanted to say"—hastily correcting herself, "are you staying here for long?"

"I have just come from Berlin," replied Lavretski, "and to-morrow I am going into the country, probably for a long time."

"I suppose you will live at Lavreek?"

"No, not at Lavreek. I have a small estate some eighteen miles from here, and to it I am going."

"That is the property your aunt left to you?"

"The same."

"Why go there, Theodore Ivanitch, when at Lavreek there is such a delightful house?"

Lavretski frowned slightly. "Yes—but there is a cottage on this estate; at present I want no more—this place is more convenient for me now."

Marie Dmitrievna again became so confused, that she sat upright unclasping her hands, and Panshin came to the rescue, entering into conversation with Lavretski. Marie Dmitrievna calmed herself, lay back in her chair, and only occasionally uttered a word, but she gazed so sorrowfully at her visitor, sighed so significantly, and shook her head so sadly, that he at last found it unbearable, and asked her somewhat sharply, "Are you well?"

"Thank God, yes," she replied. "Why?"

"It seems to me you are not quite yourself."

Marie Dmitrievna put on a dignified and somewhat offended expression. "If he treats me so," thought she, "his trouble does not concern me: it is evident, dear sir, for thee it is as water to the goose; another with grief had disappeared, yet it runs off thy back."

Marie Dmitrievna communed with herself without ceremony; when speaking aloud she expressed her thoughts more elegantly. Lavretski indeed did not resemble a sacrifice to fate—his ruddy cheeks and Russian face,

with its large white forehead, rather thick nose, and wide, well-shaped mouth, proclaimed the health of the steppes, with its tough, long-lived strength. Built like a hero, his fair hair was in disorder like a boy's. In his eyes alone, blue, prominent and slightly fixed, one might remark almost a melancholy, almost a weary expression, and the tone of his voice sounded almost too level.

Panshin kept up the conversation all the time, delivered a speech on the profits of sugar-boiling, concerning which he had lately read two French pamphlets, and with quiet modesty he told their contents, without mentioning a word about them.

"Is it really Theo?" came suddenly from the adjoining chamber, through the half-closed door, the voice of Martha Timofaievna. "Theo, just——" and the old lady quickly entered the drawing-room, and before Lavretski could rise from his chair she had thrown her arms round him.

"Show thyself, please—show thyself," said she, moving away from him. "Eh, yes, what a fine fellow! older, but no uglier, not

48 NEST OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS

a little bit, is it not so? But why dost thou kiss my hands? kiss me, unless thou findest my wrinkled cheeks unpleasant. Hast thou inquired about me? what! did he say 'Is auntie alive?' Can it be thou wert born in my arms—such a scamp;—but there, what does it matter? Why should you remember me? But thou didst wisely in coming back here. Well, mother mine," added she, turning to Marie Dmitrievna, "hast thou regaled him with anything at all?"

"I do not want anything," hurriedly interjected Lavretski.

"Do not say thus, if but a cup of tea, my good man. Gracious goodness! he has come no one knows whence, and you do not even give him a cup of tea. Leeza, go, hasten the tea forward. I remember when he was small, his terrible appetite—yes, and now it must be, he is fond of something to eat."

"My respects to you, Martha Timofaievna," murmured Panshin, approaching the old lady from behind, as she paced to and fro, and bowing low.

“Excuse me, my good sir, I was too happy to notice you. Thou art becoming like thy dear mother,” continued she, turning again to Lavretski, “but thou hadst thy father’s nose and hast it still. Tell me, art thou staying here long?”

“I am going to-morrow, auntie.”

“Where?”

“To my place—Vassilievski.”

“To-morrow?”

“To-morrow.”

“Well, if it must be to-morrow, it must be so. God be with thee; thou knowest best; but remember, come to bid me good-bye,” and the old lady touched his cheek lightly. “I did not think to see thee again, not because I am making ready to die; no, I am still good for another ten years perhaps—all we Pestovs are long-lived; thy late grandfather sometimes called us ‘double-veined.’ But truly the Lord only could know how much longer thou mightest gad to and fro abroad. A fine fellow thou art—a fine fellow; thou canst probably still raise three hundred-weight with one arm. Thy father, excuse me,

had many absurd ideas ; but he did well when he engaged the little Swiss for thee. Dost remember, how thou didst box with him—gymnastics, or something of the sort it was called. But why am I thus criticising and blaming? I but prevent Mr. Panshín (she never pronounced his name correctly Pánshin) from giving us his opinion. Yet, still better, let us drink tea : yes, come to the terrace, good man ; we will drink tea there. We have cream not quite such as your London and Paris give. Come along, come ; and thou, Theo dear, give me thy arm ; yes, what a strong one ; with thee one cannot fall."

All rose and went to the terrace ; only Gideonovski remained, and he quietly left the house. Through the whole length of the conversation of Lavretski, with the hostess, with Panshin, and with Martha Timofaievna, he sat in a corner, attentively listening, blinking, and with childish curiosity projecting his lips ; now he hastened to carry news of the visitor about the town.

.

At eleven o'clock in the evening of that same day, this is what took place in Mrs. Kaleetina's house.

Downstairs, on the threshold of the drawing-room, Vladimir Nikolaiavitch, having chosen a suitable moment, was saying good-bye to Leeza. Holding her hand in his, he was saying: "You know who draws me here; you know why I come so constantly to your home; what need is there to explain, when it is all so clear?"

Leeza said nothing: without a smile, frowning and blushing slightly, she looked down at the floor, but she did not withdraw her hand; and upstairs, in Martha Timofaievna's room, by the light of the small lamp, hanging before the old and tarnished image of a saint, Lavretski was sitting in an arm-chair, his elbows on his knees, his face in his hands. The old lady was standing before him. Now and then, without a word, she stroked his hair. For more than an hour he had sat with her, having said good-bye to the mistress of the house. He had hardly spoken a word to his kind old friend, and

she had asked no questions. Indeed, what need was there to talk ; what need to ask questions ? Even now she understood everything—felt, as he felt, everything that stirred in his overflowing heart.

CHAPTER VIII

THEODORE IVANOVITCH LAVRETSKI
(we must ask the reader's permission to break for a time the thread of our tale) came of an old aristocratic stock. Lavretski, the founder of the family, came from Prussia in the reign of Vassili-the-dark (blind), and was rewarded with a gift of land in Byaijet-ski-above. Many of his descendants served the rulers in different capacities, and under princes and distinguished men in distant palatinates, yet not one of them rose to any great position, or gained great possessions. The richest and most remarkable of them all was Andrew, the great-grandfather of Theodore, a cruel, bold, cunning, yet intelligent man ; and even to-day the noise made by his despotic justice, headstrong character, senseless generosity, and insatiable covetousness, has not quite died away. He was of great stature and very stout, and

from his dark, beardless face his voice came thickly, and it seemed dreamily; but the more gently he spoke, the more those near him trembled. He found for himself a wife of his own kind and colour—of gipsy blood, big-eyed, hawk-nosed, a round yellow face, quick-tempered and vengeful; she yielded to her husband in nothing; he almost killed her, and they snarled at one another incessantly, yet she did not survive the loss of him.

Andrew's son, Peter, the grandfather of Theodore, was quite unlike his father, being a simple country noble, blundering, bawling, slow and coarse, but not an evil man; a lover of dogs and hospitality. He was thirty years old when he inherited from his father two thousand souls¹ in excellent order; but he soon allowed them to do as they pleased, spoiled all the servants, and sold a portion of the estate.

Acquaintances and insignificant people

¹ The unit of wealth was the serf; "souls" being the usual way of speaking of them. The reply to "How many souls?" represented the wealth of the noble; acres had no meaning otherwise.

with whom he was unacquainted, like cockroaches, crowded from all sides into his spacious, warm, and unclean mansion, eating up all they could reach, till gluttoned ; drinking, till drunk ; carrying away with them whatever they were able to, praising and glorifying their affable host : and the host, when so minded, also glorified his guests as good-for-nought cringers ; yet when not surrounded by them found life irksome. He had a docile wife, chosen for him by his father, out of a neighbour's family. Anna Paulovna, so she was named, silently accepted this manner of life, cheerfully received the visitors, and herself willingly went about visiting, although the powdering of her hair, to use her own words, was as painful as dying. In her old age she would say, " Picture to thyself a head in a felt bonnet, every hair combed upwards, and greased, dusted with flour, and fixed with steel pins. Thou wastest not thyself afterwards ; and to make visits without powder—impossible—offend everybody—torture." Anna Paulovna liked to ride about behind fast-trotting horses,

and was ready to play cards the whole day long, always covering with her hand the account of her insignificant winnings when her husband approached the card-table, though she had handed over to him the whole of her own fortune without reservation. She bore him two children—a son Ivan, the father of Theodore, and a daughter Glafeera. Ivan was brought up by a rich old aunt, Princess Koubenska, she having signified it to be her intention to make him her heir (and for this alone the father agreed to part with his son). The Princess dressed him like a doll, engaged for him every kind of teacher, and placed him under a governor, a Frenchman and once a priest, a certain Monsieur Courtin de Vaucelles, a pupil of Jean Jacques Rousseau, and a clever and cunning schemer ; as she expressed it, “one of the *fines fleurs* of the emigration.” In the end, when close on seventy years of age, she married this *fine fleur*, gave almost everything she possessed to him, and soon after, rouged, perfumed with amber *à la Richelieu*, surrounded by negro pages, Italian

greyhounds, and screaming parrots, she died, lying on a curved, silk-covered Louis XV couch, with an enamelled snuff-box, the work of Petitot, in her hands ; and she died leaving behind the bereaved husband, the insinuating Monsieur Courtin, who preferred to leave the country, taking her money with him to Paris.

Ivan was only twenty years old when this unexpected blow fell upon him (we speak of the marriage of the Princess, not her death), and he did not wish to remain in the house of his aunt, where, once the rich heir, he suddenly became a mere hanger-on. In Petersburg the circles in which he had grown up were suddenly closed to him ; the thought of employment in any of the Government services, as one in the lower ranks, a life dark and difficult, was repulsive to him (this took place at the beginning of the reign of the Emperor Alexander) ; and he therefore was compelled, whether he would or not, to return to the country, to his father, to the nest in which he was born, and which seemed to him so unclean, poor

and destitute. The dumb slowness of this manner of life on the steppe offended him at every turn, the weariness of it tormented him, all around him knew it, and all except his mother regarded him with unfriendly eyes. His Petersburg manners displeased his father ; his frock-coat, frilled shirts, books, his flute, his clean habits, in which, not without reason, his disgust was felt. His father complained of and scolded his son : " Everything here displeases him," said he ; " at table he is difficult, does not eat ; the smell of the servants, the stifling atmosphere is more than he can bear ; the sight of drunken guests upsets him ; one dare not fight when he is here. Occupation he does not want ; he is weak, yet in good health. Oh, thou delicate Miss, and all because Voltaire has got into thy head, and also that fanatic Diderot." Although he had not read one line written by either of these authors, Peter Andraivitch had not been mistaken—it was exactly Diderot and Voltaire had got into his head, and not they alone ; Rousseau, and Reinhold, and Helvetius,

and many other authors of the same kind, had got into his head ; but only into his head : a former tutor of Ivan Petrovitch, a retired priest and encyclopædist, found much satisfaction in the thought that he had poured whole, into the head of his pupil, all the wisdom of the eighteenth century, and thus filled he moved about ; the wisdom dwelt within him, not mixing with his blood, nor piercing his soul ; untold in deep convictions—yes, and was it possible to ask the stripling for convictions fifty years ago—when even to-day mankind is not old enough to have them ?

Visitors at his father's house also felt uncomfortable in the presence of Ivan Petrovitch ; he disdained them, they feared him. With his sister Glafeera, who was by twelve years his elder, he was continually at variance. Glafeera was a strange being—plain-featured, hump-backed, lean, with widely open serious eyes and thin compressed lips. Her features, voice, angularity, and the quickness of her movements, brought to mind her grandmother, the gipsy wife

of Andrew. Resolute, and loving power, she would not hear of marriage. The return of Ivan Petrovitch came to her as a misfortune. Whilst he was with Princess Koubenska, she was hoping to receive at least one-half of the father's estate, and it was covetousness made an old maid's life so seductive to her ; yet beyond this, Glafeera envied her brother, he was so learned, spoke French so correctly, with a Parisian accent, whilst she could with difficulty say "*Bon jour*" and "*Comment vous portez-vous ?*"

It is true that her parents could not say so much, but this made it no lighter for her to bear.

Ivan Petrovitch did not know where to hide himself from disappointment and weariness. Almost a year passed thus, and it seemed to him as ten years ; only in talking to his mother did he ease his mind, he sat with her for hours together in her low sitting-room, listening to the silly gossip of the kind woman, and eating preserved fruits. It happened there was among the

housemaids of Anna Paulovna a very pretty girl, with clear, gentle eyes and delicate features, her name Malaniya, intelligent and modest; she looked with pleasure at Ivan Petrovitch the first time she passed him, and he fell in love with her, he loved her timid gait, her quiet little voice and timid answers, her gentle smile; every day she appeared to him more charming, and she became bound to Ivan Petrovitch with all her soul, as only a Russian maiden knows how to bind herself, and yielded up herself to him. In a country mansion it is impossible for long to keep a secret; soon every one knew of the ties that bound the young master to Malaniya, and at last it came to the ears of Peter Andraivitch. At another time he, in all probability, would have given no attention to so unimportant an occurrence; but for a long time his son had irritated him, and he was glad of the occasion to shame the learned man, the Petersburg fop . . . turmoil, uproar and threats arose. They put Malaniya into a store-room, under lock and key, and Ivan Petrovitch was

commanded into the presence of his parents. Anna Paulovna had hastened to know the reason of such noise ; she would have tried to calm her husband, but he would not listen —like a hawk he hovered over his son, reproached him with immorality, with godlessness, with hypocrisy, and indeed discharged all the long-boiling disappointment Princess Koubenska had caused him, and overwhelmed his son with offensive words. At first Ivan Petrovitch stiffened himself and was silent, but when the father threatened him with a shameful punishment, he could bear no more. “ The fanatic Diderot on the scene once more,” thought he, “ I will then set him at the affair ; but wait, I will astonish all of you,” and then and there, with a quiet level voice, though he trembled internally in every member of his body, Ivan Petrovitch told his father, that he needlessly reproached him with immorality, that although he had no intention to justify his fault, he was ready to right any wrong he had done, and the more willingly since he felt himself to be above all prejudices : to speak exactly,

he was ready to make Malaniya his wife. Having uttered these words, Ivan Petrovitch without any doubt achieved his purpose ; he so astonished his father, that the latter for an instant remained dumb, with widely-opened eyes ; but he quickly recovered himself, and just as he was, in jacket lined with white fur, his bare feet in slippers, so he rushed with upraised fists on Ivan Petrovitch, who that day, as if purposely, had dressed his hair *à la Titus*, and had put on a new blue English frock-coat, top boots with tassels, and elegant closely-fitting chamois breeches.

Anna Paulovna shrieked loudly and covered her face with her hands ; whilst her son ran through the house, bounded into the courtyard, rushed into the garden, through the garden into the road, and on without a single backward glance, until he could no longer hear pursuing him the sounds of his father's heavy steps, and loudly repeated shouts, "Stay, blackguard ! Stay ere I curse thee."

Ivan Petrovitch hid himself in the house

of a neighbouring farmer, and Peter Andraivitch returned home exhausted and wet with perspiration ; and whilst still gasping, gave notice that he disinherited his son, and would deny to him his blessing ; ordered that all his foolish books be burnt, and that the girl Malaniya be sent without delay into a distant part of the country. Kind people discovered themselves, sought out Ivan Petrovitch, and told him all that had been said and done ; amazed, furious, he vowed to take vengeance on his father, and that same night, watching the peasant waggon on which they were bearing off Malaniya, took her by force, hurried with her to the nearest town, and married her. A neighbour supplied him with money, a very kind retired naval officer, who was rarely sober long, and a great lover of every, as he called it, noble history.

On the day following his marriage Ivan Petrovitch wrote a bitingly cold and polite letter to Peter Andraivitch, and went to another part of the country, where his cousin Dmitri Pestov lived, together with his sister

Martha Timofaievna, who is already known to the reader. To them he told everything and that it was his intention to go to Petersburg, to seek his living, and he besought them, even if but for a time, to give shelter to his wife. At the word wife he burst into tears, crying bitterly, and like an unfortunate being, fell on his knees before his relations, and even bowed himself till his forehead touched the floor. Filled with pity, the Pestovs, who were kind people, willingly granted his prayer. Ivan Petrovitch remained with them for three weeks, secretly hoping for a letter from his father ; but no letter came, neither was it possible one should come, for Peter Andraivitch, learning of the marriage of his son, took to his bed and forbad any one to speak the name of Ivan Petrovitch in his presence ; only the mother, unknown to her husband, borrowed five hundred roubles from an elder of the church, which she sent to her son together with a small sacred image for his wife. She feared to write, but ordered the messenger, a lean peasant, who could cover

forty miles in twenty-four hours, to tell Ivan Petrovitch not to grieve much—that God willing all will be arranged, and the father’s anger will turn to mercy ; that she would have wished for him another as wife, but that evidently it had pleased God as it was, and she sent to Malaniya Sergaievna a parent’s blessing. The lean moujik delivered the money, asked to be allowed to see the new mistress, who was his godchild, kissed her hand, and hastened home.

Ivan Petrovitch set out for Petersburg with a light heart ; the unknown future was awaiting him, poverty it might be threatened him, but he had torn himself away from the unbearable manner of life in the country, and, more important, had not betrayed his teachers ; indeed, he had brought into action and upheld the ideals of Rousseau, Diderot, and “the declaration of the rights of the individual.” The feeling of a duty accomplished, exaltation, a feeling of pride, filled his soul—yes, and the separation from his wife did not trouble him much. The necessity to live with her constantly would

have troubled him more. That work was done ; other work must now be undertaken.

In Petersburg, contrary to his expectation, circumstances favoured him. The Princess Koubenska, already abandoned by Monsieur Courtin, but not yet claimed by Death, in order to smooth over the uneasiness she felt in the presence of her nephew, besought the influence of all her friends in his favour, and gave him five thousand roubles, almost the remains of her fortune, and her watch with her monogram within a garland of cupids, made by Le Pique.

Three months had not yet passed when he received an appointment on a Russian ambassade to London, and in the first English sailing-ship leaving Petersburg he sailed across the sea, A few months later he received a letter from his cousin Pestov ; the kind gentleman congratulated Ivan Petrovitch on the birth of a son, who first saw light in the village of Pokrovsk, on the 20th August, 1807, and was given the name Theodore, in memory of the holy martyr Theodore the Stratelat. Owing to her ex-

treme weakness Malaniya Sergaievna wrote only a few lines, but even those few lines astonished Ivan Petrovitch ; he did not know that Martha Timofaievna had taught his wife to read and to write. However Ivan Petrovitch did not for long give way to the sweet agitation of the feelings of a father ; he was wooing a Phryne, or a Lais of the moment (classical names still flourished at that time).

The Peace of Tilsit had just been concluded, all were hastening to enjoy themselves ; all were whirling along in some furious dance, and the black eyes of some bold beauty had made dizzy the head of Ivan Petrovitch. Of money he had not much, but was fortunate at the card table, made acquaintances, took part in all the pleasures of the moment ; in a word, sailed on with all sail set.

CHAPTER IX

FOR a long time the old man Lavretski could not forgive his son, yet if at the end of six months Ivan Petrovitch had come to him with bowed head, and had thrown himself at his feet, he would perhaps have pardoned him ; first scolding him well, and giving him a blow with his cane as a warning. But Ivan Petrovitch was living abroad and gave no sign of care.

“ Be silent, do not dare,” repeated Peter Andraivitch to his wife every time she began to try to soften his determination. “ He must always thank God that I did not lay a curse upon him. My father would have killed so worthless a one with his own hand, and would have done well.”

Anna Paulovna made no answer to such terrifying speeches, only crossed herself stealthily. Of the wife of Ivan Petrovitch he refused at first to hear anything, and even

in answer to a letter from Pestov, in which the latter mentioned his daughter-in-law, he ordered that Pestov should be told, that he had no knowledge of any such one as a daughter-in-law, and that he considered it to be his duty to warn Pestov that the law forbade any one to keep fugitive girls. But afterwards learning of the birth of a grandson he grew kinder, and ordered that he should be privately informed of anything that concerned the health of the mother, and sent her, also as it were not from himself, a little money.

Theo was not yet twelve months old when Anna Paulovna fell ill with a fatal sickness. A few days before the end, already unable to raise herself in bed, with trembling tears in her dim eyes, she told her husband in the presence of the priest, that she wished to see and bid good-bye to her daughter-in-law, and to bless her grandson; the distressed old man soothed her and at once sent his own carriage for his daughter-in-law, calling her for the first time, Malaniya Sergaievna. She came with her son and

with Martha Timofaievna, who did not wish that she should go alone on any account, and would allow no one to offend her. Malaniya Sergaievna, half dead with fear, entered Peter Andraivitch's study, followed by the nurse, carrying Theo. Peter Andraivitch, without speaking, looked at her; she approached his hand, her trembling lips scarcely meeting in a soundless kiss.

"Well, low-born aristocrat," said he at last, "good health to you; we will go to the mistress." He rose and bent over Theo; the child smiled and stretched out its pale little hand; it transformed the old man. "Oh," murmured he, "half-orphaned, beseechest thou me for thy father? I will not forsake thee, little bird."

Malaniya Sergaievna entered the bedroom of Anna Paulovna, and fell on her knees inside the door. Anna Paulovna signed to her to approach the bed, embraced her, blessed her son, then turning her face, worn with much suffering, to her husband, would have spoken.

"I know, I know what thou wishest to

ask," murmured Peter Andraivitch. "Do not grieve: she will stay with us, and for her sake I will forgive Ivan."

Anna Paulovna with an effort caught the hand of her husband and pressed her lips to it. That same evening she was no more.

Peter Andraivitch kept his word. He informed his son that he gave to him again his blessing in memory of the last moments of his mother, and for the sake of little Theodore, and that Malaniya Sergaievna should live with him at home. He set apart for her use two rooms on an upper floor, presented her to his most respected visitors, to the crooked Brigadier and his wife, and gave her two maids and a boy to go on errands. Martha Timofaievna bid her good-bye; she detested Glafeera, and in the course of a single day quarrelled with her three times. It was burdensome and uncomfortable to the poor young mother at first, but afterwards she learnt to put up with, and became accustomed to, her father-in-law; he also accustomed himself to her presence, and even loved her, although he scarcely ever spoke with her,

and in his very kindnesses to her could be found an involuntary contempt. It was at the hand of her sister-in-law she suffered most. Glafeera already, during the life of her mother, succeeded by degrees to the management of the whole house. All, beginning from her father, submitted to her; except by her direction, a lump of sugar was not used, and she would rather have accepted death than the division of her influence with another mistress—and such a mistress. The marriage of her brother angered her even more than Peter Andraivitch. She took upon herself the education of the upstart, and Malaniya Sergaievna from the first hour became her slave. How was she able to struggle with the unmanageable, arrogant Glafeera—she, mute, constantly abashed, and frightened, her health already enfeebled? No day passed but that Glafeera reminded her of her former condition, praised her for not forgetting herself. Malaniya Sergaievna would willingly have borne these reminders and commendations, bitter as they were, but they took Theo from her; that blow crushed her.

Pretending that she was not strong enough to undertake the training of the child, they hardly allowed her to see him. Glafeera undertook the task, and Theo was placed entirely under her direction.

In her grief Malaniya began in her letters to beseech Ivan Petrovitch to hasten his return. Peter Andraivitch himself wished to see his son, but the latter only replied in order to thank his father for that which he had done for Malaniya, and for the money sent to him. He promised to come home soon—but did not come.

The events of the year 1812 decided at last his return from abroad. Meeting one another for the first time after a separation of six years, father and son embraced one another, saying no word about former dissensions : it was no moment for such memories ; all Russia was rising to meet the foe, and they both felt that Russian blood ran in their veins. Peter Andraivitch, at his own expense, equipped a regiment of soldiers ; but the war ended, the danger passed.

Ivan Petrovitch again grew weary of the

life; the old way of living again attracted him, in that world in which he grew up, and in which he felt at home. Malaniya Sergaievna was unable to keep him, she was to him too insignificant a thing: her dearest hope was shattered—her husband also found it to be more suitable to confide the training of Theo to Glafeera. The poor mother did not long outlive this blow and the second separation; without a murmur, she faded away in a few days.

During the whole of her life she had not known how to gainsay anybody, and against the infirmity she did not struggle. When she was already unable to speak, when the shadows of the grave already fell across her face—though her features, as always, expressed patient perplexity and the constant tenderness of humility—she, with that same dumb respect, looked up at Glafeera, and as Anna Paulovna, on her death-bed, kissed the hand of Peter Andraivitch, so she put her lips to the hand of Glafeera, committing to her, to Glafeera, the care of her only son. So this kind and gentle being finished its earthly

task. God knows why she was torn from her native soil, and in the same hour thrown away, like an uprooted sapling, its roots bared to the sun ; it withered, it disappeared, leaving no trace, and no one thought with grief concerning it. Malaniya Sergaievna was regretted by her maids, and by Peter Andraivitch secretly ; the old man missed her silent presence.

“ Good-bye, my gentle friend, good-bye,” whispered he, bowing before the body for the last time in the church, and he wept as he dropped a handful of earth into the grave.

Peter Andraivitch did not long survive Malaniya, not more than five years. In the winter of the year 1819 he died quietly in Moscow, whither he had gone with Glafeera and his grandson to live.

In his will he expressed the wish to be buried by the side of Anna Paulovna and by “ Malasha ” (Malaniya).

Ivan Petrovitch was at that time in Paris for his own pleasure, having retired from the diplomatic service soon after the year 1815.

Learning of the death of his father, he decided to return to Russia ; it was needful to consider arrangements for the management of the estate. Yes, and Theo, according to the letter of Glafeera, was already twelve years old. The time had come to consider seriously his education.

CHAPTER X

I VAN PETROVITCH returned to Russia an Anglomaniac. His hair cut short, the frill of his shirt starched, a long-skirted, pea-green frock-coat with many capes, a sour expression on his face; something severe, yet undisturbed, in his treatment of others. His words came through his teeth, a wooden, sudden laugh, absence of smiles, conversation exclusively political or politico-economical, a passion for underdone beef and port wine, —everything about him betokened Great Britain, he seemed to be saturated with its spirit. But, miraculous result, transformed into an Anglomaniac, Ivan Petrovitch became at the same time a patriot; at least he called himself a patriot, although he knew Russia imperfectly, had not a single Russian habit, and explained himself strangely when speaking Russian. In an ordinary conversation his speech, awkward and halting, was

full of gallicisms, but directly the talk touched upon important matters, Ivan Petrovitch immediately made use of such expressions as "To render new experiences of zeal itself," "This one is not in agreement with the nature itself of the circumstances," and so on. Ivan Petrovitch had brought with him several manuscript plans, concerning the construction and betterment of the Empire; he had been very dissatisfied with all he had seen—the absence of any kind of system especially stirred his bile. In his interview with his sister he informed her, with his first words, that he intended to carry out radical reforms, that from now onwards everything would be done according to a new system. Glafeera Petrovna did not reply to Ivan Petrovitch, she only set her teeth and reflected, "What will become of me?" but having arrived in the country together with her brother and nephew her uneasiness disappeared. In the house a few changes were made, hangers-on and idlers were without delay driven out, and amongst the sufferers two old women, one blind, the other crippled by paralysis; also

an infirm old major, a survivor of the siege of Otchakov, who on account of his really extraordinary greediness was fed on black bread and lentils alone. An order was also given that the former visitors would not be received. A distant neighbour took the place of them all—a certain blond, scrofulous baron, an extremely well-bred and an extremely stupid person.

New furniture made its appearance from Moscow : spittoons, chimes, and washstands ; luncheon was served in a different manner, foreign wines supplanted vodka and sweet liqueurs ; new liveries were made for the servants, and to the family crest was added the motto, "*in recto virtus.*"

In reality Glafeera's power was in no wise lessened. The buying of everything, the giving out of everything, as formerly, were controlled by her ; a new butler brought from abroad, from Alsace, would have disputed her authority—he lost his place, the protection of his master availing him nothing.

As to the management of the estate, of the stock and crops (Glafeera entered also into

this business), notwithstanding the frequent iteration of the intentions of Ivan Petrovitch "to breathe new life into this chaos," everything remained as before, only rents here and there were increased, the unpaid labour demanded of the moujik became heavier, and he was forbidden to appeal directly to Ivan Petrovitch ; the patriot already deeply despised his fellow citizens.

The new system of Ivan Petrovitch in its full force, was experienced only by Theo; his training did indeed undergo radical reform.

CHAPTER XI

UNTIL the return of Ivan Petrovitch from abroad, Theo, as we have already said, was entirely under the care of Glafeera Petrovna ; he was not allowed to see his mother every day, and was not eight years old when she died, yet he loved her dearly, and the picture of her, of her pale, gentle face, her sad eyes, and timid caresses, was impressed on his heart for ever. He dimly understood her position in the house—he felt that some barrier between her and him existed, which she did not dare to break down ; his father he avoided, and Ivan Petrovitch never caressed him ; his grandfather at long intervals stroked his head, and allowed him to take his hand, but considered the boy a fool and called him so.

After the death of Malaniya, his aunt took charge of him altogether. Theo feared her, he feared her light-coloured, ever-watching eyes, her cutting voice ; he did not dare to

utter a sound in her presence—if he but shifted slightly on his chair, instantly she hissed, “Whither? sit still!” On Sundays, after dinner, he was allowed to play—that is to say, a thick book was given to him, a mysterious book, called *Symbols and Emblems*, the work of a certain Ambodik; this book contained about a thousand pictures, for the most part highly enigmatical, and as many enigmatical explanations in five languages. Cupid, with a naked, puffy body, played many parts in these pictures. To one of the pictures, entitled “*The Saffron and the Rainbow*,” was subjoined the explanation, “*The action of this is powerful*”; to another, entitled, “*The heron flying with a violet blossom in its beak*,” was subjoined, “*To Thee they are all known*”; and under a third, entitled “*Cupid, and the bear licking its cub*,” was written, “*Bit by bit*.” Theo looked at these pictures; the smallest detail of each one of them was known to him; over a few of them, and always the same ones, he pondered; they stirred his imagination. He knew no other diversion.

84 NEST OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS

When the time to teach him languages and music came, an old Swedish maiden lady with hare-like eyes was engaged by Glafeera Petrovna and given an insignificant wage ; her conversation, half French, half German, was faulty, she played the piano in a manner, and beyond this salted cucumbers excellently well. In the company of this instructress, of his aunt, and of an old chamber-woman, Vassilievna, Theo passed four long years. It often happened that he was sitting in a corner with his *Emblems*—sitting—sitting—in the corner of the low room, with the smell of the geraniums ; a tallow candle burning dimly ; a cricket crying monotonously, weary of it ; the little clock on the wall ticking hurriedly ; a mouse stealthily biting and gnawing behind the tapestry ; the three old maids—the Fates—silently sitting, only the tap of their swiftly moving knitting-needles was heard, and on the wall in the dim light, now running, now shaking strangely, were seen the shadows of their hurrying hands, causing strange and also half-darkened thoughts to throng the head of the little

lad. No one would have called Theo an interesting child; he was rather pale, but stout, loosely built and awkward—a real moujik, said Glafeera Petrovna. The paleness would soon have disappeared had he but been allowed to run about more often in the open air. He learned his lessons satisfactorily, although with frequent fits of laziness; he never cried, but from time to time was possessed by a savage obstinacy, and when in such a state none could manage him; of those around him he loved no one. . . . There is grief in the heart which loved not in childhood.

Such was Theo when Ivan Petrovitch took him in hand, and losing no time, commenced to apply to him his “system.” “I want to make of him, above all things, *a man*,” said he to Glafeera Petrovna, “and more than a man—a *Spartan*.”

To fulfil his intention Ivan Petrovitch began by dressing Theo in the costume of a Scottish Highlander; the twelve-year-old lad began to go about with bare legs, and with a cock’s feather in his glengarry bonnet.

The old Swedish lady was replaced by a young Swiss, a perfectly trained gymnast. Music, as a subject unworthy of the attention of a man, was abandoned for ever: the natural sciences; international law; mathematics; carpentry, following the advice of Jean Jacques Rousseau; and heraldry, for the encouragement of "chivalrous feeling"—these were the subjects which must occupy the attention of the future *Man*.

He was awakened at four o'clock of the morning. Cold water was without delay poured over him, and he was made to run round a tall post, doing giant strides with the help of a rope. He ate once a day, making his meal off a single dish; rode on horseback, shot from a cross-bow, and on every suitable occasion, with his parent as his example, practised firmness of will. Each evening he wrote, in a special book, an account of the day's doings, and the impressions left on his mind.

For his part Ivan Petrovitch wrote out instructions for Theo in French in which he called him "*mon fils*," and when speaking to

him used "*you*." When speaking Russian to his father Theo used "*thou*," but he never dared to seat himself in his father's presence.

The system warped the judgment of the lad, muddled his brain, restricted its action, but the new manner of life acted most beneficially on his bodily health ; at first it was almost unbearable, but he soon settled down to it and became a fine young fellow ; and in his pride the father, speaking his own strange dialect, called him "Nature's son, my own production."

When Theo was sixteen years old, Ivan Petrovitch decided that it had become his duty to implant, in good time, the mind of his son with a contempt for women ; and the young Spartan, full of sap, force, and blood, his soul filled with modesty, and the down just showing on his lips, already strove to appear unmoved, cold, and harsh.

Whilst all this was happening, time was flying. Ivan Petrovitch lived, for the greater part of the year, at Lavreek (so was named his principal hereditary estate), but he spent the winter in Moscow, alone, in an hotel,

assiduously visited his club, declaimed and explained his plans in drawing-rooms, and more than ever showed himself to be an Anglomaniac, a fault-finder, and an imperial thinker. But the year 1825 had come, and had brought with it much political trouble. Close acquaintances and friends of Ivan Petrovitch were treated with much harshness, and he himself hurriedly left Moscow for the country, and shut himself up in his own house. Another year passed; he began to ail, to grow weaker, health forsook him, and he became despondent. The free-thinker began to go to church, to order prayers to be said for him; the European began to take steam baths, to dine at two o'clock, to retire at nine, and to chatter like an old butler; the empire-builder burnt all his plans, all his notes, trembled in the presence of the governor, jumped about in the presence of the superintendent of police; and the man with the iron will blubbered and complained when served with a plate of cold soup. Glafeera Petrovna again took charge of the whole establishment, and the

village bailiff, clerks, and moujiks once again began to come and go by the back entrance to see the old "butter-beater," so those working around the house called her. The change in Ivan Petrovitch greatly astonished his son, who was already nineteen years old, and had begun to reflect and to rid himself of the bonds with which his father's hand had bound him. He had before noticed the disagreement between the word of his father and his works; between his broad and liberal theories and his unfeeling, despicable tyranny; but he did not expect so abrupt an alteration. The decaying egoist suddenly stood naked before him. Young Lavretski was making ready to go to Moscow, to prepare himself for the university, when without warning a new calamity befel Ivan Petrovitch: he became blind, blind without hope, in a single day. Having no faith in the skill of Russian doctors, he began to agitate for permission to go abroad.¹ The authorities refused him;

¹ No Russian subject can leave the country without permission. Ivan Petrovitch was under suspicion as a "reformer."

90 NEST OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS

then he set out with his son, and for three whole years wandered about Russia, from one doctor to another, travelling without rest from town to town, until his fretfulness and cowardice brought the doctors, his son, and his servants to the verge of desperation. He returned to Lavreek a mere wreck, a crying, peevish child, and many weary days followed, every one suffering much on his account.

Ivan Petrovitch was only quiet whilst dining—never did he eat so much and so greedily as now ; but at all other times he gave no peace either to himself or to those about him, murmured at fate, scolded himself, scolded politics, his own system, scolded all things of which he had formerly boasted and been proud, all things which he had at some time held up as an example to his son ; repeated that he believed in nothing, then prayed anew. He would not bear, for a single instant, to be alone ; demanded of those in the house that they be seated constantly near his arm-chair and keep him interested in tales, which he interrupted with cries of, “ You are lying—every word ”—“ What nonsense ! ”

The lot of Glafeera Petrovna was especially hard. Ivan Petrovitch was quite unable to get on without her, and to the end she tried to satisfy all the fancies of the invalid, although sometimes she did not decide instantly to reply to him, so that the sound of her voice should not betray her animosity. Thus he creaked for two more years, and died on a May-day on the balcony, whither he had been carried into the sun. "Glashka, Glashka, *bouillon, bouillon*, old fo——" stut-tered his fumbling tongue, and without finishing the last word was silent for ever. Glafeera Petrovna, who had just seized the cup of bouillon which the domestic brought, stopped, looked into her brother's face, slowly, widely crossed herself, and went silently away. The son, who was there, also uttered no sound; leaning on the rail of the balcony, he gazed long at the green, sweetly smelling garden, all glittering in the beams of the golden spring sun. He was twenty-three years old. How horribly, how unnoticeably quickly those twenty-three years had hurried away! . . . Life lay open before him.

CHAPTER XII

HAVING buried his father, and handed over to the unavoidable Glafeera Petrovna the management of the estate, young Lavretski set out for Moscow, attracted thither by a hazy yet irresistible longing; he recognised the imperfection of his education, and intended, as far as possible, to obtain the knowledge which he felt to be wanting. During the last five years he had read much and seen a little, and a multitude of thoughts wandered through his mind; some professor might have envied the knowledge he had—yet, at the same time, he did not know many things which a schoolboy had known for years. Lavretski knew that he was not free; he felt within himself strange influences. The Anglomaniac had played an unkind trick upon his son; so fantastic an education bore its own fruit; for long years he had submitted without

hesitation to his father, and when at last he understood him, the harm was already done, tendencies had taken root. He did not know how to adapt himself to people ; twenty-three years old, with the unconquerable hunger of love in his bashful heart, he had not yet dared to look into the eyes of any woman ; with his intelligence, clear and strong, but somewhat slow ; with his tendency to obstinacy, meditation, and laziness, it was necessary that he should grow up from an early age in living surroundings, yet he was kept in unnatural loneliness . . . and thus, though the cursed ring had vanished, he continued to stand on the same spot, chained and weighed down by his very self.

It was laughable, at his age, to put on the uniform of a student, but he did not fear derision ; for that, if for nothing else, his Spartan training had prepared him ; it developed within him disdain for the prejudices of others, so without a grimace he put on a student's uniform, and attended the physico-mathematical lectures. Strong, ruddy-

cheeked, bearded, and silent, he made a strange impression on his companions; they did not suspect it, that in that crude man, driven punctually to the lecture in a broad, country, pair-horsed sledge, was hidden the heart of a child; he appeared to them to be some wise pedant of whom they had no need, and did not seek to know. He avoided them.

During the first two years spent by him at the university he only became intimate with one fellow-student, of whom he took lessons in Latin. This student, Mikaelaivitch by name, enthusiast and versifier, liked Lavretski sincerely, and quite accidentally was responsible for a very important alteration in his life. Once, in the theatre (Motchaloff was then at the height of his fame, and Lavretski did not miss a single representation), in one of the boxes of the grand tier he saw a young girl; and although no woman could pass before him without causing his heart to beat faster, never yet had it beaten so furiously as at that moment. Leaning forward, with her elbows on the

velvet-covered ledge of the box, the young girl did not stir : dainty young life showed itself in every feature of her round, dark, exquisite face ; refined intelligence was expressed by her fine eyes, attentively and softly gazing from beneath her narrow eyebrows, by the quick smile on her expressive lips, and by the very pose of her head, hands, and neck ; and she was charmingly dressed. By her side was sitting a lady of forty-five years, *décolletée*, with a black toque above a yellow, wrinkled, deeply anxious, unintelligent face, upon which tottered a toothless smile. At the back of the box could be seen an old man in a wide frock-coat and a high neckerchief, with an expression of stupid hauteur, and a kind of fawning suspiciousness in his little eyes, with dyed moustaches and whiskers, an immense meaningless forehead, and withered cheeks—everything proclaiming him to be a retired general. Lavretski had not turned away his eyes from the young girl whose appearance had so moved him when suddenly the door of the box was opened, and

Mikaelaivitch entered. The apparition of this man, almost the only acquaintance he had in all Moscow, the sight of him in the society of the only woman who had absorbed the whole of his attention, seemed to Lavretski both remarkable and supernatural. Continuing to gaze at the box, he noticed that all those in it treated Mikaelaivitch as an old friend. That which was passing on the stage ceased to occupy the attention of Lavretski; and although Motchaloff himself seemed that evening to be particularly inspired, his acting did not make the usual impression upon him.

In one very pathetic scene, Lavretski involuntarily glanced at the beautiful young girl: she was bending forward with burning cheeks, and under the influence of his intense gaze her eyes, fixed on the stage, slowly turned and rested on him. . . . The whole night those eyes shone indistinctly before him. At last the dam so unnaturally built up had burst. He both trembled and burnt, and on the day following sought out Mikaelaivitch. From him he learnt that the name of the

beautiful girl was Barbara Paulovna Korobina, that the old gentleman and the old lady who were sitting in the box with her were her father and mother ; and that he, Mikael-aivitch, had become acquainted with them a year ago, whilst living in the suburbs of Moscow with the family of Count H—— as a tutor. The enthusiast rendered a glowing account of the beautiful qualities of Barbara Paulovna. “ This, thou brother of mine,” he cried, with the jerky chant in his voice peculiar to him, “ this young girl—is a wonderful, talented being, and with it all one of the kindest ; an artist in the fullest sense of the word.” Noticing, from his questions, what an impression had been made on Lavretski by Barbara Paulovna, he himself offered to present him to the family, of which, he added, he was almost a member ; that the general was not at all a proud man, and that the intelligence of the mother just saved her from sucking rags. Lavretski blushed, muttered something inarticulately, and hurried away. For five whole days he struggled against his timidity ; on the sixth the young

98 NEST OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS

Spartan, wearing a new uniform, surrendered himself to Mikaelaivitch, who, caring for the opinion of none, confined himself to the use of a hairbrush, and set out with Lavretski for the house of Mrs. Korobina.

CHAPTER XIII

PAUL PETROVITCH KOROBIN, the father of Barbara Paulovna, a retired major-general, had spent the whole of his life in Petersburg in the Service. In his youth he was considered to be a skilful dancer and a zealous officer, but poverty made him adjutant to three or four repulsive generals; he married the daughter of one of them, taking twenty-five thousand roubles as her marriage portion; he imbibed to the last drop all the wisdom of instructions and inspections, drew and dragged the plough, till at last, after twenty years of it, he became a major-general. Here he should have rested awhile to fortify his position, without hastening his prosperity, and so he calculated to do, but managed the business a little too carelessly. He invented a new method of using the country's money—the method was an excellent one—but he hesitated at the

100 NEST OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATORS

wrong moment, and was reported ; the affair became more than unpleasant, and ended in an ugly history. Somehow the general escaped from the history, but his career was broken and he was advised to send in his resignation.

For two more years he haunted Petersburg, hoping that he might slip into some warm Government billet, but he hoped vainly. His daughter finished her education, expenses increased day by day ; so, hiding his anger, he decided to move to Moscow, where it cost less to live, and took a tiny, low house, situated in the Old Mews, with a coat-of-arms seven feet high exposed above the modest dwelling, and commenced to live there as a retired Moscow general, spending 2,750 roubles a year. Moscow, a hospitable city, gladly welcoming anybody and everybody, welcomed generals still more gladly. The figure of Paul Petrovitch, well charged, but not without military bearing, soon began to appear in the best Moscow drawing-rooms ; his bald crown surrounded by locks of dyed hair ; his greasy ribbon of the Order of St.

Ann, on a neckerchief the colour of a crow's wing, became well known to all the pale, weary young men, wandering sadly round the card tables during the time devoted to dancing.

Paul Petrovitch knew how to make a place for himself in society; spoke little, but by habit through his nose, except of course when speaking with persons of higher rank than himself; played cards carefully, and at home ate moderately, as a guest ate for six. Concerning his wife there is almost nothing to be said: she was called Calliope Carlovna; tears trickled from her left eye, and therefore Calliope Carlovna (being of German extraction) considered herself to be a woman with very tender feelings. She constantly awaited something dreadful—to be hurried from the half-finished feast—wore a tight velvet costume and tarnished worthless bracelets. Barbara Paulovna was the only daughter of Calliope Carlovna and Paul Petrovitch; she had just completed her seventeenth year when she quitted the Petersburg High School, where she had been considered, if

not the most beautiful pupil, most certainly the cleverest, and the best musician ; and where she received the decoration instituted by the Empress. She was not yet nineteen when Lavretski saw her for the first time.

CHAPTER XIV

THE legs of the Spartan all but forsook him, when Mikaelaivitch led him into the somewhat untidy drawing-room of Mrs. Korobina and presented him to the hostess, host, and Barbara Paulovna ; but the feeling of timidity which had mastered him soon vanished. In the General, that inborn kindness common to all Russians was increased by that particular affability which is characteristic of those who have been touched by suspicion ; the General's wife was soon forgotten ; but Barbara Paulovna was so calm and self-confidently caressing, that every one in her presence at once felt himself at ease. From the whole of her enchanting body ; from her smiling eyes ; from her innocently sloping shoulders ; from her light, and at the same time as if wearied movements ; from the very sound of her voice, deliberate and sweet—was ex-

haled an indefinable, perfume-like, insinuating charm, a soft and still bashful delicacy ; a something difficult to describe, but which touched and moved, and quickly excited a feeling which certainly was not timidity. Lavretski spoke of the theatre, of yesterday's representation ; she at once began to speak of Motchaloff, and without confining her criticism to sighs and exclamations, expressed herself in a few just remarks upon his acting with womanlike penetration.

Mikaelaivitch spoke of music ; she at once, without ado, sat down at the piano, and played delightfully a few of the mazurkas of Chopin, whose music was just becoming fashionable, and thus the time passed till the dinner-hour. Lavretski rose to take his leave, but was persuaded to remain, and at table the General gave him some very good claret, for which the lackey had taken a cab to Dupré's.

Late in the evening Lavretski returned home, and sat for a long time without undressing, his hand over his eyes, enraptured. It seemed to him that only now did he

begin to feel the beauty of life ; all his theories and intentions, all turmoil and ashes had vanished suddenly. His whole soul was flooded with one feeling, with one wish, the wish for happiness ; for the possession of love, of the sweet love of a woman. From that day he became a frequent visitor at the house of the Korobins. Six months later, he offered to Barbara Paulovna his hand, asked her to be his wife, and his offer was accepted.

The General long ago, almost on the eve of the day on which Lavretski paid his first visit to the house, had inquired of Mikaelaivitch how many souls Lavretski possessed : yes, and Barbara Paulovna, who during the whole of the young man's courtship, and even during those few moments in which she promised to become his wife, preserved her usual calmness and clearness of mind ; it was well known to her that the man she accepted as her future husband was a rich man : and Calliope Carlovna reflected, " My daughter is making a fine match," and bought for herself a new toque.

CHAPTER XV

AND thus his offer was accepted, but several conditions were imposed. Lavretski must at once leave the university : what kind of people marry students ? and again how strange to find a rich landlord, twenty-six years old, taking lessons like a schoolboy ! Barbara Paulovna must buy all the presents, choose even the bridegroom's presents ; she had so many practical ideas, such good taste, and a great love for comfort, so thoroughly understood how to attain her own comfort. This understanding especially astonished Lavretski ; when, immediately after the wedding, he with his wife set out for Lavreek in a comfortable chaise, which she had bought—how everything around him had been considered, foreseen, and prearranged by Barbara Paulovna.

What charming necessities for travellers

were brought out from different convenient hiding-places : what enchanting dressing-cases, and vessels for coffee ; and how delightfully Barbara herself prepared the coffee in the morning ! Although Lavretski was then in no condition to examine life—he was thirstily quaffing happiness, abandoning himself to it, like a child—this young *Alcayde* was as innocent as a child. The charm exhaled from the whole being of his young wife was no free gift—not as a gift did she dole out the secret luxury of unexplored joys, keeping herself well in hand. They arrived at Lavreek during the heat of summer ; the house, she decided, was dirty and dark, the service old-fashioned and ridiculous, but she did not consider it necessary to speak of anything to her husband. If she had thought to settle at Lavreek, she would have changed all this, beginning with the house ; but the thought of living in a spot so retired had never for an instant entered her mind. She lived there as in a tent, bearing the inconveniences sweetly, treating such manner of life as a

joke. Martha Timofaievna drove over to see her favourite; and although Barbara Paulovna made herself most agreeable, the old lady did not like her. With Glafeera Petrovna the new mistress was unable to agree, and would have left her in peace, but her father wished to have a hand in the affairs of his son-in-law; he wished to manage the estate of so near a relative: "that," said he, "is not shameful even to a general": one can imagine that Paul Petrovitch would not have disdained to occupy himself with any estate, even that of a stranger.

Barbara Paulovna led the attack on Glafeera Petrovna with extreme artfulness; revealing nothing in advance, she was to all appearance immersed in the happiness of the honeymoon, in the peace of a country life, in music and reading; but little by little she so hemmed in Glafeera Petrovna that the latter ran like a mad woman into the library, where Lavretski was sitting one morning, flung a bunch of keys on to the table, and made it known that she had not strength

left to carry on the management, and did not wish to remain at Lavreek. Having been suitably prepared for such an occurrence, Lavretski at once agreed to her departure—to the surprise of Glafeera Petrovna. “Very well,” said she, her eyes darkening, “I see I am no longer wanted ; I know who drives me from here—from the nest where I was born ; but mind thee of my word, nephew, thou shalt wander all thy life, and nowhere make for thyself a nest ; that is my testimony against thee.” That same day she went away to her own property. A week later General Korobin arrived, and, with a pleasant melancholy in his looks and movements, took upon himself the management of the estate.

In September Barbara Paulovna went to Petersburg, taking her husband with her : she spent two winters in Petersburg (passing the summer at Tsarskoi Selo) in a fine, well-lighted, elegant flat ; made many acquaintances, some even in the highest social circles, entertained their acquaintances, and visited constantly. The musical evenings

and dances of Barbara Paulovna being most delightful, she attracted guests as flame attracts moths. So thoughtless a life did not please Theodore Ivanitch much; his wife advised him to enter the army, but the memory of his father's teaching, and his own understanding, robbed him of any desire to do so; yet he remained in Petersburg for his wife's pleasure, and soon became aware that no one attempted to entice him from his increasing solitariness; that it was not by chance he had the quietest and most comfortable study in all Petersburg; that his devoted wife was even ready to help him to make his solitude more secure: henceforward everything went smoothly. Once more he set himself to work on his (as he considered) unfinished education, once again began to read seriously, and even commenced to study the English language. It was strange to see his powerful broad-shouldered figure constantly bent over the writing-table, his full, ruddy, bearded face half hidden in the leaves of a dictionary or exercise-book. All the morning he worked, and having

dined well (Barbara Paulovna was a manageress such as few are), he spent the evening in an enchanting, odorous, brilliant world, peopled with young and joyful faces, and the centre of this world was also the zealous hostess, his wife. She overjoyed him with the birth of a son, but the poor child did not live long, it died in the spring; and when summer came, with the advice of the doctors, he took his wife abroad to drink the waters. Change and amusement were necessary to her after such a misfortune, and her health even required a warm climate. They spent the summer and autumn in Germany and Switzerland, and when winter arrived, as it was proper to expect, set out for Paris. In Paris Barbara Paulovna expanded like a rose, and with the same quickness and cleverness as in Petersburg, made for herself a nest. She found a dainty residence in one of the quiet but fashionable streets of Paris. She ordered for her husband such a dressing-gown as he had never yet worn, engaged elegant servants—an excellent cook, a smart footman;

bought an adorable carriage and an enchanting piano. A week had not passed before she was able to cross a street, wear a shawl, open her sunshade, and put on gloves, no less gracefully than a highly bred Parisian. With acquaintances she soon provided herself; at first her visitors were all Russians, but French visitors soon began to call: extremely affable, polite bachelors, with fine manners and full sounding names, they all spoke quickly and much, greeted the hostess with polished ease, pleasantly blinking their eyes and showing glistening white teeth under rosy lips—and how nicely they smiled! Each one of them brought his friends, and the beautiful Madame de Lavretski soon became known from the Chaussée d'Antin to the Rue de Lille.

At that time (it happened in the year 1836) the tribe of journalists and chroniclers, who now swarm everywhere, like ants on an opened ant-hill, had not yet begun to multiply; but already then there appeared in the drawing-room of Barbara Paulovna a certain Monsieur Jules, a gentleman with a dis-

pleasing exterior and a disagreeable reputation, impudent and mean, like all duellists and pugnacious people. Barbara Paulovna found this M. Jules quite repulsive, but she received him because he supplied paragraphs to several papers, frequently mentioning her as "M-me de L—tski," or "M-me de —, this great and distinguished Russian lady, who resides in the Rue de P——." He related to the whole world (that is to say, to the few hundreds of subscribers to such papers, and who took no interest in M-me de L—tski) how this lady was truly a Frenchwoman by intellect (higher praise no Frenchman can give), sweet and amiable, what a rare musician, and how marvellously she waltzed (she certainly waltzed so that all hearts attached themselves to the frill of her light flowing garments). In a word, he brūited abroad her renown, and this—whatever any one may say—is agreeable.

Mademoiselle Mars was at that time on the stage, but Mademoiselle Rachel had not yet appeared; nevertheless Barbara Paulovna assiduously visited the theatres. Italian

music filled her with ecstasy, and the ruins of Odri made her laugh. She yawned decently during a French comedy, and the acting of Madame Dorval in some ultra-romantic melodrama drew tears from her eyes ; yet still more important, Liszt played for her twice, and was so sweet, so simple—charming.

In the enjoyment of such pleasant emotions the winter passed, and towards the end of it Barbara Paulovna was presented at Court. Theodore Ivanitch, for his part, was not wearied, although sometimes life seemed to bear heavily upon him—heavily because it was so empty. He read the papers, attended lectures at the Sorbonne and College of France, took an interest in parliamentary discussions, and undertook the translation of a known and learned treatise on irrigation. “I am not losing my time,” thought he ; “all this will be useful. Before next winter it will be necessary to return to Russia and settle down to work.” It is difficult to say whether he clearly admitted to himself what kind of work, or not, and only God knows if

he would have been able to return to Russia before the winter. In the meantime he made arrangements to go with his wife to Baden-Baden, but an unexpected occurrence upset all his plans.

CHAPTER XVI

ENTERING one day the boudoir of his wife during her absence, Lavretski noticed on the floor a carefully folded little note. Mechanically he picked it up, and, without thinking, opened it and read the following words, written in French:—

“DEAR ANGEL BETSY (I cannot decide to call thee Barb or Barbara),—I waited for thee at the corner of the boulevard, fruitlessly. Come to-morrow at half-past one to our apartments; thy fat good man of a husband at that time is generally buried in his books. We will sing once more that little song of your poet Pushkin, which thou taughtest me—

“‘Old husband, Awful husband.’

A thousand kisses to thy hands and feet.

“I await thee,

“ERNEST.”

Lavretski did not at once understand what it was he read ; for the second time he read it, and everything swam before his eyes ; the floor rolled under his feet, as the deck of a ship in a storm ; he shouted, groaned, and wept all in a single moment. His reason left him. He had so blindly trusted his wife ; the possibility of deceit, of betrayal never entered his mind. This Ernest, the lover of his wife, was a fair-haired, pretty boy of twenty-three years, with a turned-up little nose and thin moustaches, almost the most contemptible of all her acquaintances. Several minutes passed, half an hour passed ; Lavretski still stood on the same spot, fingering the fatal letter, and gazing vacantly at the floor. Through some darkly writhing atmosphere, pallid faces appeared to him, distant and indistinct ; his faintly-beating heart was in an agony ; it seemed to him he was falling, falling, eternally. A familiar sound unbound him—the light rustle of a silk dress : Barbara Paulovna in hat and shawl had returned hastily from a walk. Lavretski, trembling all over, hurled himself

from the room ; he felt that at that instant he was capable of tearing her limb from limb ; of beating her, as a moujik would do, till she lay half-dead ; of strangling her with his own hands. The amazed Barbara Paulovna wished to stay him ; he could only mutter " Betsy "—and quitted the house.

Lavretski called a coach and told the driver to take him beyond the town. The rest of that day and the whole of that night he wandered about, stopping continually to strike one hand with the other. At one moment he was beside himself, at another his situation became as if funny, even merry.

In the morning, driven by cold, he entered a mean inn on the outskirts of Paris, asked to be given a room, and seated himself on a chair at the window. He was seized by the desire to yawn continuously, convulsively ; he could scarcely keep himself upright ; his body was without strength, but he felt no fatigue, yet weariness claimed its own ; he sat and looked, but understood nothing ; did not understand what had happened to him—why he was sitting alone, with wooden limbs,

with a bitter taste in his mouth, and a stone on his chest, in an empty, unfamiliar chamber. He did not understand what had made Barbara surrender herself to that Frenchman ; nor, knowing herself to be unfaithful, how she could be innocently calm, innocently caressing, and confiding with him ! “ I do not understand,” his dry lips whispered.

“ Who can assure me now, that in Petersburg . . . ” and without finishing his question he yawned again, shuddered, and his whole body seemed to shrink. Clear memories and clouded equally tormented him. Suddenly he remembered that but a few days ago, in his presence, and in the presence of Ernest, she sat down at the piano and sang

“ Old husband, Awful husband.”

He remembered the expression on her face, the strange glitter of the eyes, the heightened colour of her cheeks—and he rose up from the chair. He wanted to go to them ; to tell them, “ The jest you laid on me is lost ; my great-grandfather hung peasants by a

rib, but my grandfather was himself like a peasant" and to kill them both.

Then suddenly it seemed to him that everything that was happening to him was a dream—not even a dream, an absurdity ; that he had but to shake himself, to look around him—he glanced round, and as the hawk drives its talons into the captured bird, anguish cut its way deeper and deeper into his heart.

In a few months Lavretski had hoped to be a father ; that thought crowned the calamity. . . . The past, the future, his whole life was empoisoned.

He returned to Paris, engaged a room in a hotel, and sent the note of Mr. Ernest to Barbara Paulovna, with the following letter :

“ The enclosed bit of paper will explain everything. I do not understand how you, always so careful, left so important a document lying about (this sentence poor Lavretski had prepared, and repeated to himself during several hours). I can never see you again : I must sup-

pose you cannot wish for an interview with me. I have decided to allow you fifteen thousand francs a year ; it is the most I can do ; send your address to my Estate Office. Do as you will, live as you will. I wish you happiness. An answer is not necessary."

Lavretski wrote to his wife that an answer was not necessary ; but he waited and thirsted for an answer, for an explanation of this unfathomable, incomprehensible calamity.

That same day Barbara Paulovna wrote to him a long letter in French. That letter convinced him, his last doubt left him, and he was ashamed that any doubt should have been left. Barbara Paulovna offered no justification, she wished only to see him, she prayed of him not to decide her lot irrevocably. But the letter was cold and stiff, although here and there could be seen the stains of tears. Lavretski laughed bitterly, and ordered the messenger to say that all was well.

Three days later he left Paris, but not to return to Russia ; he went to Italy. He him-

self did not know why he chose to go to Italy ; since it was quite indifferent to him whither he went—away from home. He sent an order to his head clerk for the annuity to be paid to his wife, ordering him at the same time to at once relieve General Korobin of all duties connected with the estate, and allowing no delay for the handing over of the accounts, to make arrangements for the departure of his Excellency from Lavreek. He pictured to himself vividly the confusion and empty haughtiness of the dismissed General ; and even in his great grief felt a certain vicious enjoyment. Then he wrote to his aunt Glafeera Petrovna, asking her to return to Lavreek, sending in her name a power of attorney. Glafeera Petrovna did not return to Lavreek, and published in the papers a notice of the destruction of the power of attorney, which was done with excessive energy.

Lavretski hid himself in a small Italian town. For a long time he was unable to prevent himself seeking for news of his wife. From the papers he learned that she had left

Paris and gone to Baden-Baden, as she had arranged to do. Her name soon appeared in an article over the signature of the M. Jules we already know. In that article, beneath the usual silliness, could be felt a certain friendly compassion, which left a most disagreeable impression on the mind of Lavretski. Later he learned that a daughter had been born to him, and from his steward received a note to say that Barbara Paulovna had demanded the first third of the annuity.* Then rumours became more and more disagreeable ; and finally in all the papers there appeared a tragi-comic history in which his wife played an unenviable rôle : all was finished, Barbara Paulovna had become " famous."

Lavretski ceased to seek for news of his wife, but for long he was unable to settle down to work. Sometimes such grief overcame him, that it seemed to him that he would give anything—even, perhaps, would forgive her—only to hear again her caressing voice, to feel once more her hand within his own.

Nevertheless time did not pass fruitlessly. He was not born a sufferer ; his healthy nature asserted itself. Much became clear to him ; the blow itself, having felled him, seemed to him no longer unforeseen. He understood his wife. It is only when standing away from some one near to you that it becomes possible to fully understand that one.

He again became able to occupy himself, to work, although with far less zeal than formerly. Scepticism took possession of his soul, driven in by his experiences of life and by his early training. He became indifferent to everything.

Four more years passed away, and he felt himself strong enough to return to his native land, and to meet his own people ; without staying in Petersburg or Moscow he reached the town of O——, where we parted from him, and whither we will now ask the indulgent reader to return with us.

CHAPTER XVII

AT ten o'clock in the morning of the day following the one we have already described, Lavretski was mounting the steps before Mrs. Kaleetina's house, just as Leeza was leaving it.

"Where are you going?" he asked her.

"To Mass : to-day is Sunday."

"Do you go to Mass?"

Leeza looked at him silently and with wonder.

"Please pardon me," said Lavretski hastily ; "I—I did not want to say that. I came to bid you good-bye ; in an hour I am going to my place in the country."

"It is not far from here, is it?" asked Leeza.

"Twenty-five versts."

At that moment Lena, accompanied by a maid, appeared at the door.

"Take care not to forget us," said Leeza,

speaking quickly and turning to descend the steps.

“And do you not forget me ; yes, listen,” added he : “you are going to church ; when you pray, pray for me.”

Leeza stopped and turned towards him.

“As you wish it,” she said, looking at him straightly, “I will pray for you,” adding, “Let us go, Lena.”

Lavretski found Marie Dmitrievna alone in the drawing-room, smelling of eau-de-Cologne and peppermint ; she said her head ached and that she had passed the night restlessly. She received him with her usual languishing amiability, and by degrees became talkative.

“What a pleasant young fellow Vladimir Nikolaiavitch is, is he not ?” she asked.

“Who is Vladimir Nikolaiavitch ?”

“Panshin ; you met him here yesterday ; you made a great impression on him. I will tell you as a secret, my dear cousin, he has completely lost his heart to Leeza ; and why not ? He is of good family, an excellent worker, intelligent, already a gentle-

man-of-the-bedchamber ; and if it should be the will of God—I for my part, as a mother, shall rejoice : a great responsibility certainly ; the happiness of the children depends on the parents, and it can be said, be it ill or well, I have done everything for them, always I alone, whatever had to be done ; trained them, and taught them ; I have done it all. I have just engaged another governess through Mrs. Boluse.”

Marie Dmitrievna continued to describe her anxieties, her endeavours and her maternal feelings. Lavretski listened to her silently, turning his hat in his hands. The cold, heavy expression he wore discomposed the chattering lady.

“ Does Leeza please you ? ” she asked.

“ Elizabeth Mikaelovna is a very beautiful young woman,” replied Lavretski ; and rising, he bade good-bye to Marie Dmitrievna and went to Martha Timofaievna’s room.

Marie Dmitrievna with displeasure watched his retreating figure, and thought, “ What a walrus ! now I understand why his wife was not able to remain faithful to him.”

Martha Timofaievna was sitting in her room, in the midst of her subjects—five in number, each one almost equally dear to her: from the stout-throated, learned bullfinch, which she loved because it had ceased to whistle and to draw up buckets of water; the little timid peaceful dog Roski; and the bad-tempered cat Sailor; to the dark-skinned active little girl of nine, with the great eyes and pointed nose, called Shoorotchka; and the middle-aged woman of fifty-five, with the white cap and short brown mantle over a dark dress, by name Nastasia Karpovna Ogarkova. The little girl was the daughter of poor townspeople, both dead. Martha Timofaievna took her out of pity, as also the little dog; she found them both in the street, both were lean and hungry, both soaked with the autumn rains; no one came to claim the dog, and the uncle of Shoorotchka, even gladly, gave her to Martha Timofaievna; he was a drunken slipper-maker, without enough to eat, and did not feed his niece, but hit her on the head with his awl. The old lady made the

acquaintance of Nastasia Karpovna on a pilgrimage to a monastery ; she herself went up to her in a church (she pleased Martha Timofaievna because, in the latter's own words, "she prayed nicely"), entered into conversation with her, and invited her to come and drink a cup of tea with her. From that day till now Nastasia Karpovna had not quitted her : she was a woman of very cheerful and gentle character, a childless widow, belonging to the poorer nobles ; she had a round grey head, soft white hands, a soft face with large kindly features, and a rather comic, turned-up nose. She worshipped Martha Timofaievna, and the latter was very fond of her, although she made fun of her romantic heart. Nastasia had a weakness for the affairs of all young people, and blushed like a young girl at the most innocent joke. Twelve hundred roubles was all the wealth she possessed ; she lived at the expense of Martha Timofaievna, but on equal terms, as the latter would not put up with servility.

"Ah, Theo!" she said, as soon as he

appeared, "thou didst not see my family yesterday evening : love them all. We are just sitting down to drink tea—for the second time, it being a holiday. Thou mayest stroke them all, only Shoorotchka does not allow it, and the cat will scratch thee. Thou art going to-day?"

"To-day," said Lavretski, seating himself on a low chair; "I have already bid Marie Dmitrievna good-bye, and I saw Elizabeth Mikaelovna."

"Call her Leeza, my son : what hast thou to do with Mikaelovna? Sit still, thou, Shoorotchka—wilt break the chair."

"She was going to Mass," continued Lavretski : "is she so devout?"

"Yes, Theo, very—more so than we are, or thou, Theo."

"Yet you are devout!" remarked Nastasia Karpovna in a whistling voice; "but to-day you did not go to early Mass, you are going to the later one."

"No, I shall not; thou wilt go alone. I am growing lazy, mother mine," replied Martha Timofaievna. In speaking to

Nastasia she used "thou," although they lived on an equal footing: she was not a Pestov without knowing it. Three Pestovs were named in the necrology of Ivan the Terrible. Martha Timofaievna knew this.

"Tell me, please," began again Lavretski; "Marie Dmitrievna spoke to me just now about this—what is he called?—Panshin. What kind of a man is he?"

"What a babbler! forgive me, O Lord," growled Martha Timofaievna. "Probably told thee something as a secret: that a suitor is twisting about; has been building castles with her son-of-a-priest. Evidently the girl thinks little of it and feels nothing, thank God. And she is already chattering!"

"Why 'thank God'?" asked Lavretski.

"For this reason, that the young man does not please me, and what is there to rejoice about?"

"He does not please you?"

"Yes, we are not all captivated by him; enough for him that Nastasia Karpovna is in love with him."

The poor widow was altogether shocked.

“What are you saying, Martha Timofaievna? you do not fear God!” cried she, a blush spreading instantly over her face and neck.

“And she knows it—the rogue,” broke in Martha Timofaievna, “knows it; with what did he steal her love? Presented her with a snuff-box. Theo, ask her to give thee a pinch of snuff; thou wilt see what a bonny snuff-box it is. On the lid there is a picture of a hussar on horseback: you already feel better, mother mine? you don’t explain?”

Nastasia Karpovna could only wave her hands.

“And Leeza,” asked Lavretski, “is indifferent to him?”

“He seems to please her—yet who can know? Thou knowest, the soul of another is like a dark forest, and a young girl’s still more so. There is Shoorotchka’s soul: approach it, guess what is in it. Why does she hide herself, and not come out, since thou camest?”

Shoorotchka writhed with suppressed

laughter and rushed from the room, and Lavretski rose from his chair.

“Yes,” said he slowly, “none can divine what is in the soul of a maid.”

He commenced to say good-bye.

“How is it? shall we see thee again soon?” asked Martha Timofaievna.

“As it may happen, aunt; it is certainly not very far to come.”

“Yes, thou goest to Vassilievski, thou dost not wish to live at Lavreek . . . that is thy affair; but drive over to pay thy respects to the grave of thy mother, and to thy grandmother’s grave at the same time. Abroad thou hast gathered much wisdom, but who knows? it may be that in their graves they will feel that thou hast come to them. Yes, and do not forget, Theo, to ask that prayers may be said for Glafeera Petrovna; here is a rouble—take it, take it: I also wish that a requiem may be sung for her. Whilst she was alive I did not love her, but it is useless to speak of it; by character she was an old maid. She was capable; she left thee all thou couldst

expect. And now begone, or I shall weary thee. God be with thee."

And Martha Timofaievna embraced her nephew.

"Leeza will not marry Panshin—be not uneasy about it; she is worth a better husband."

"Yes, I am not at all uneasy about it," replied Lavretski, and was gone.

CHAPTER XVIII

FOUR hours later Lavretski set out for home ; the carriage rolled quickly along the soft country road. For two weeks there had been no rain ; a thin mist gave a haziness to the air, and lay on the distant forest, from which there came a faint smell of burning logs. Many small grey clouds with invisible boundaries were strewn over the pale blue sky, and a busy wind blew in a dry steady current, without dissipating the great heat.

Lying back, with his head on the cushion, his arms folded across his chest, Lavretski gazed on the furrowed land, hurrying fan-shape past him, on the distant furze bushes coming and going slowly ; on the wary rooks and crows, glancing sideways with dull suspicion at the passing carriage ; on the long boundary ditch, overgrown with mugwort, wormwood, and low service trees ; he gazed

. . . and this refreshing, fertile nakedness and growth of the steppe, this greenery, those long hills, those coombes, the sides covered with shrub-like oaks; the grey villages, the slender birches—all this, this Russian picture so long unseen by him, wafted into his soul a sweet and at the same time almost sad emotion; crowding, it seemed to him, into his breast with pleasant eagerness.

His thoughts wandered lazily, sketching ideas indistinctly, confusedly, like sketches of those high, and also as if wandering, clouds. He thought of his childhood, his mother; he remembered how she died, how he was taken to her, and how she pressed his head to her breast, began to chant over him, glanced at Glafeera Petrovna, and was silent. He thought of his father, at first confident of himself, dissatisfied with everything; of his metallic voice; then of his blindness, his weeping, and his unclean grey beard; and how once at table, having drunk an extra glass of wine, and upset the sauce into his napkin, he suddenly began to laugh,

and to tell of his conquests, growing red, and winking his sightless eyes. He thought of Barbara Paulovna and involuntarily winced, as if from some momentary internal pain, and shook his head. Afterwards his thoughts wandered to Leeza. "There," thought he, "is a young being just beginning life. A noble girl, she will achieve something. And she is beautiful: a pale, fresh face ; eyes and lips so serious ; a glance honest and innocent. It is a pity she seems somewhat inclined to be mystical. A noble figure, and walks so lightly ; a calm voice. I like so much when she stops suddenly, listens attentively without a smile, then pushing back her hair, reflects. It certainly seems to me Panshin is not worthy of her ; yet what do I know bad of him ? and again of what am I dreaming ? She will jog along the road by which every one jogs. It would be better if I go to sleep." Lavretski closed his eyes.

He could not sleep, but was overwhelmed by the silence of the drowsy journey. Images from the past, as before, slowly rose up, and floated about in his mind,

mixing and becoming confused with other shapes. Lavretski, not knowing why, began to think of Robert Peel, . . . of French history . . . of how he would have won the battle, had he been the general ; he thought he heard the shots and cries. . . . His head glided to one side, he opened his eyes . . . those same fields, that same view of the steppe ; the worn shoes of the offside horse, still glinted alternately through the rising dust. The driver's shirt, yellow with red gussets, was still filled out with wind. "A fine return to my native country," thought Lavretski, and shouted "Get on" ; covered himself with his coat, and settled himself more firmly against the cushions. . . .

The carriage struck some obstacle. Lavretski sat up, opening his eyes widely ; before him, on the rising ground, stretched a small village, and a little to the right could be seen the ancient Manor-house with its closed shutters and distorted steps ; over the wide courtyard, from the very gates, nettles were growing, green and thick like hemp ; in the yard was standing an outhouse, built

of oak and still sound. The driver turned the horses' heads towards the gates and stopped. This was Vassilievski.

Lavretski's valet rose from his seat, and, as if preparing to jump down, shouted "Hi!" A hoarse muffled bark was the only reply, but even the dog did not show itself. The valet again prepared to jump from the box and again shouted "Hi!" The worn-out bark was repeated, and a moment later, as if from nowhere, an old man, with hair as white as snow, appeared, wearing a short nankin shirt outside his loose trousers; he looked at the carriage, shading his eyes from the sun, then suddenly with both hands smote his thighs, swayed for a moment on his feet and rushed to open the gates. The carriage drove into the courtyard, rustling through the nettles, and stopped at the steps before the chief entrance.

The white-haired servant, evidently ubiquitous, already stood on the bottom step, his crooked legs set wide apart; and having unbuttoned the apron and turned it back with unsteady hand, he helped the master to descend, then kissed his hand.

“Good health! Good health, brother,” said Lavretski. “It seems to me thou art called Anton? Thou art still alive?”

The old man bowed silently, and hastened away for the keys. Whilst he was gone the driver sat motionless, leaning on his elbow, looking at the locked door, and the valet, in a picturesque attitude, with one hand on the carriage, remained standing on the spot he had touched when he jumped at last from the box. The old man brought the keys, and, without any necessity, doubled himself up like a serpent, the elbow of the hand with which he inserted the key raised well above his head, opened the door, drew to one side, and again bowed low.

“Here am I at home, here am I returned,” thought Lavretski, entering the tiny outer hall, whilst the shutters, with blows and creaks, were opened one after the other, and the sunlight flooded the deserted chambers.

CHAPTER XIX

THE house to which Lavretski had returned, and in which two years before Glafeera Petrovna had died, was not a large one. It was built in the previous century of solid pine logs, and though it looked as if about to fall, was good for another fifty years or more. Lavretski went through all the rooms, and ordered that all the windows be opened, to the great discomfort of the ancient, feeble flies, which, with white dust on their backs, clung motionless to the lintels; since the death of Glafeera Petrovna the windows had remained closed. Everything in the house remained as it was. The thin-legged white little divan in the drawing-room, reminiscent of the time of Katherine, with its grey glossy covering, worn and impressed by former users; near it stood the favourite armchair of the late mistress, with the high, straight back against which, even in old age,

she did not lean. On the largest wall-space hung the ancient portrait of Theodore's great-grandfather, Andrew ; the swarthy, bilious-looking face was hardly discernible from the darkened and warped background ; the small cruel eyes gazed sadly from under the overlying, as if swollen, eyelids ; the black hair, without powder, brushed upwards from the heavy, furrowed forehead. On one corner of the frame hung a wreath of dusty *immortelles*. "Glafeera Petrovna herself was pleased to twine it," explained Anton. In the bedroom stood a narrow bedstead, under a canopy of very old and good striped material, and upon it lay a heap of discoloured pillows and a thin quilted coverlet. From the head of it hung an ikon, representing the "Presentation of the Virgin Mary in the Temple"—the same ikon to which the old maid, when alone and dying, forgotten by all, had for the last time pressed her already cold lips. The little toilet-table, inlaid with many different kinds of wood, with its brass receptacles, crooked mirror and blackened gilt, stood before the window. Next to the

bedroom was the oratory, a small chamber with bare walls, and in one corner of it a heavy glass case for images ; on the floor lay a small carpet, worn and covered with spots of wax ; on it Glafeera Petrovna had prayed, bowing her head to the ground.

Anton had gone with the valet to open the stables and coach-house, and an old woman appeared, to take his place, of about the same age as he. Her shaking head was bound about with a kerchief to her very eyebrows ; her eyes looked out dimly, but expressed zeal, and from long habit unquestioning obedience, with at the same time a respectful pity. She approached Lavretski, took his hand, and bowing, kissed it, then retired and stood by the door to await his orders. He had quite forgotten her name, did not even remember to have ever seen her before. He discovered her name to be Aprakseya, and that forty years ago Glafeera Petrovna had ordered her to leave Lavreek and come to Vassilievski as fowl-keeper. She rarely spoke, had outlived her intelligence, retaining a look of servility. As well

as these two old folks, and three little pot-bellied children in long shirts, the great-grandchildren of Anton; there lived in the yard a one-armed, untaxable, miserable peasant, who mumbled a noise like a heath-cock, and was quite incapable of doing anything. Slightly more useful was the worn-out old dog which greeted with his tongue the return of Lavretski; bought by order of Glafeera Petrovna, it had already been on its heavy chain for ten years, and was but just able to move, dragging its burden.

Having looked over the house, Lavretski went into the garden, and was contented, for though everywhere overgrown with weeds, burdock, gooseberry bushes and raspberry canes, it contained many shady spots, many old lime trees, the size of which and the strange forms of the branches astonished him. They had been planted too closely together, and some time—a hundred years ago—pollarded. At the bottom of the garden was a pool of limpid water, and around the pool a narrow border of rushes tinted redly. Vestiges of human existence are hidden very

quickly, and the garden of Glafeera Petrovna, though it had not yet freed itself from all traces of thralldom, seemed to be already wrapt in that gentle slumber which creeps over everything on earth when undisturbed by the restless interference of mankind.

Lavretski also walked through the village. The old women looked at him from the thresholds of their huts, a cheek laid on an open hand. The men, from afar, bowed. The children hurried out of sight, and the dogs barked unconcernedly.

At last Theodore Ivanitch became hungry, but he did not expect his servant and cook till evening, and the waggon of provisions from Lavreek had not yet come. Anton must be consulted. Anton at once made the necessary arrangements. He caught, killed and dressed an old hen, which Aprakseya rubbed, washed, and scrubbed like dirty linen before putting it into the saucepan; and when at last it was cooked Anton covered and laid the table, brought an enamelled and almost black salt-cellar on three legs, a carafe with a narrow neck and ball-topped stopper,

and in a singing voice reported to Lavretski that the food was ready, and, a napkin twisted round his right hand, placed himself behind Lavretski's chair, making fragrant the air around him with a peculiar, strong and ancient smell like that exhaled by the cypress tree. Lavretski tasted the broth and then tried the fowl, the skin of which was quite covered with coarse pimples, thick sinews occupied the legs, and the crevassed flesh declared itself to be ancient.

Having dined, Lavretski said he would have liked to drink a cup of tea if "In a minute, sir, it shall be brought, sir," broke in the old man, and kept his word. In a twist of red paper a morsel of tea was discovered, a small but bright and hissing samovar was brought, and sugar, in tiny pieces as if crushed, was found. Lavretski sipped the tea from a large cup, a cup which was known to him in his childhood; playing-cards were imaged upon it, and from it only guests drank, and now he was drinking from it—as if a guest.

In the evening the servants came. Lav-

retski did not wish to lie in the bed of his aunt, and ordered a bed to be made up for him in the dining-room. After blowing out the candle he lay for a long time with open eyes, and with thoughts that were not cheerful. He experienced the feeling familiar to every one to whom it has happened to pass the night in a long-since-deserted dwelling-place. It seemed to him as if the darkness surrounding him was unable to accustom itself to the new dweller, that the very walls of the house were in perplexity. At last he yawned, drew the coverlet over him, and fell asleep.

Anton was the last to seek his bed. For a long time he remained whispering with Aprakseya; from time to time he groaned humbly, and crossed himself twice. They neither of them expected that the master would come to live at Vassilievski when he had near by such a fine estate with so beautiful a mansion. They could not suspect that the very mansion was repulsive to Lavretski, stirring within him painful memories. Having whispered all his thoughts to

the old woman, Anton took his stick, struck several times the long-silent watchman's board¹ hanging outside the granary, and here, without any covering to his white head, he laid himself down on the ground. The May night was soft and caressing, and the old man slept peacefully.

¹ A board, one of several, hung in a convenient place, and struck at intervals with his staff by the night-watchman as a signal to the inmates and thieves that he is watching.

CHAPTER XX

ON the following day Lavretski rose early; talked with the bailiff, visited the rickyard, and ordered the chain to be taken off the old yard dog, which barked a little, without moving away from the kennel. Having returned to the house, he passed into a kind of peaceful trance, and so remained for the whole day, saying to himself more than once, "Here am I at the bottom of the river." He sat near the window without moving, as if listening to the pulse of the peaceful life which surrounded him and to the sounds which came occasionally from the depths of the countryside. There, somewhere beyond the nettles, some one is singing softly with a thin, fluty voice; here a gnat is humming an accompaniment. The singer pauses, the gnat hums on. Through the friendly, ever-complaining buzz of the flies is heard the fiddling of a great

bumble-bee, which—and that is the trouble—is bumping the ceiling with its head ; a cock in the village street crows, hoarsely drawing out the last note ; a waggon rattles ; in the village a yard door creaks. “ What is it ? ” suddenly croaks an old woman. “ O thou my little mistress,” says the voice of Anton, speaking to the two-year-old child he is dandling in his arms. “ Bring the kvass ! ”¹ comes from the throat of the same old woman ; and suddenly all is still, silence reigns. Nothing taps, not a leaf rustles, the swallows follow one another over the ground making no sound, and the silence of their flight causes sadness to the watcher. “ Here am I at the bottom of the river,” he thought again. “ Life here is always and ever calm and without haste,” thought he ; “ who comes within the circle must submit. Nothing here to excite, nothing to harass ; here he alone is fortunate who, with just deliberation, lays his path, as, guiding his plough, the labourer makes the furrow. What vigour

¹ A very lightly fermented drink, usually made from black bread, sometimes from cranberries, etc.

in all around us, what wholesomeness under this leisurely silence ! Under this window a sturdy burdock is rising up out of the thick grass ; beneath the burdock, lovage is urging upwards its juicy stalk ; ‘ our Lady’s tears ’ still higher thrusts its rosy clusters, and farther away, in the fields, gleam rye and oats, the straw already hard and hollow. And every leaf on every tree, each blade of grass upon each stalk, opens itself widely, seeking its full width. On the love of woman my best years have been wasted ; may this silence sober me, may it bring me peace, and teach me how, without haste, to achieve my task.” Lavretski again resigned himself to listen to the tranquil life, expecting nothing, yet constantly expecting ; the silence engulfed him. The sun drove silently across the calm blue sky, in which the clouds, seeming to know whither and why, gently floated.

At that same moment, in other spots of the earth’s surface, life was hurrying, seething, rioting ; whilst here that same life flowed noiselessly like water through marsh grass.

Until late in the evening Lavretski was unable to tear himself away from the contemplation of this passing, escaping life. The sorrow in his soul for that which was past melted and disappeared like snow in spring ; and never before had he felt so deeply, so powerfully the call of his native land.

CHAPTER XXI

IN two weeks Theodore Ivanitch put the little house of Glafeera in order, cleaned the courtyard and the garden, brought from Lavreek the furniture he required, and from the town wine, books, and papers. Horses appeared in the stables, and in a word he provided himself with whatever was necessary, and began to live—not like a lord, nor yet like a hermit. Day followed day, one like the others, and, although he saw no one, the life did not become wearisome. He occupied himself industriously and attentively with the management of the estate, rode on horseback over the district, and read: although he did not read very much, finding more pleasure in listening to the tales of Anton. Usually he seated himself near the window, with his pipe and a cup of cold tea; Anton stood near the door, his hands clasped behind him, and, speaking

slowly, told his tales of long long ago : of those fabulous times when oats and rye were sold, not by measure, but in large sacks, at two or three farthings a sack ; when on all sides, even to the town, extended impenetrable forest, untouched steppes. "And now," complained the old man, over whom eighty years had already passed, "the land is so cleared and ploughed there is nowhere to go." And thus Anton also told many things concerning his lady, Glafeera Petrovna : how judicious she was, and how saving ; how a certain young gentleman, a neighbour, had tried to gain her favour, became a frequent visitor, and how, for him, it pleased her to put on her best cap with the rose-coloured ribbons and her yellow *trew-trew Levantine* dress ; and how later the gentleman neighbour made her angry with this indecent question—"Of what size, madam, ought your fortune to be ?"

She gave orders that he should be turned away from the door. And the old man told how she then ordered that, after her death, everything, to the smallest rag, should be

presented to Theodore Ivanitch. And thus exactly he found all the goods and chattels of his aunt untouched, not excluding the Sunday cap with the rose-coloured ribbons and the yellow *trew-trew Levantine* dress. Of ancient papers and curious documents, which he expected to find, there were none, only one dissolute little notebook, in which his grandfather, Andrew Petrovitch, had written here and there. . . . "A fête in the town of St. Petersburg to celebrate the conclusion of peace with the Turkish Empire by his Highness Prince Alexander Alexandritch Prozorovski." Or, a recipe for a decoction for the chest, with directions: "These instructions were given to Theodora Kaltikovna, the wife of General Praskov, by the arch-priest of the church of the Trinity, Theodore Auksentovitch." Or, political news like the following: "No news concerning the French tigers." And on the opposite page, "In the Moscow papers it is reported that Major Mikael Petrovitch Kolitcheff is dead. Is this not the son of Peter Vassilitch Kolitcheff?"

Lavretski also found a few old calendars, a dream-reader's companion, and the mysterious writings of Mr. Ambodik ; many memories were stirred within him by the long-forgotten, yet still familiar, *Symbols and Emblems*. In the dressing-table he found a small packet tied with black ribbon, sealed with black wax, and thrust to the very back of the drawer. In the packet, face to face, were two portraits : his father in his youth, with soft curls falling over his forehead, long, languishing eyes, and half-closed mouth ; and the all but vanished portrait of a pale woman in a white dress, with white roses in her hand—the portrait of his mother. Of herself Glafeera Petrovna had never permitted a portrait to be made.

“ I, dear sir, Theodore Ivanitch,” said Anton to Lavretski, “ although I did not then live at the great house, remember your great-grandfather, Andrew Athanasitch. Why not ? When he died I was already eighteen. Once I met him in the garden ; my very hams began to shake ; however, he did nothing—only asked my name, and

sent me to his room for a handkerchief. Whatever is said, he was a noble. And a better than himself he never knew, and that, I assure you, is why he had such a miraculous amulet, which a monk from Mount Athos gave him; and that monk said to your great-grandfather, 'Boyar, I give thee this because of thy great heart; wear it, and fear none.'

"Well, dear sir, all know what was done in those times, is it not so? What the master wanted to do he did. It happened that even one of the nobles was taken with the idea to contradict him. He but looked upon that one and said, 'Thou art on thin ice': these were ever his favourite words."

"And your great-grandfather, of blessed memory, lived in a small wooden house. But what wealth he left behind him! what roubles! what stores of everything! Every cellar was full to the brim; he was a manager. That carafe it pleased you to praise, that was his; he drank vodka from it.

"And your grandfather now, Peter Andraivitch, he built for himself a stone palace,

but gathered no wealth, and everything went anyhow. He lived in worse condition than his papa, and drew no enjoyment from it—squandered all his money, and not enough left to say a mass for his soul ; even a silver spoon was not left, and for that the zeal of Glafeera Petrovna is to be thanked.”

“ But is it true,” interrupted Lavretski, “ that they called her the Old Butter-beater ? ”

“ But what manner of folks called her so ? ” replied Anton, with displeasure in his voice.

Once the old man decided to ask, “ Tell me, dear sir, what is our mistress doing ? Where does it please her to live ? ”

“ I have left my wife,” said Lavretski with energy. “ Do not mention her, if you please.”

“ I hear, sir,” said the old man sadly.

At the end of three weeks Lavretski rode into O——, and spent the evening with the Kaleetins. Lemm was there, and he pleased Lavretski very much. Although his father had decided that he should not learn to play

any instrument, nevertheless he was very fond of music—serious, classical music.

Panshin was not there that evening; the Governor had sent him somewhere out of town. Leeza played alone, very precisely. Lemm softened, became gay, and with a roll of paper conducted. Marie Dmitrievna laughed at him at first, and then went to bed, explaining that Beethoven affected her nerves overmuch. At midnight Lavretski accompanied Lemm home, and sat with him till three in the morning. Lemm was talkative, his eyes glistened and opened widely. He forgot the stoop and sat upright, and even the hair over his forehead raised itself. It was already a long time since any one had visited him, and he felt that Lavretski was interested in him, questioning him anxiously and attentively, which touched the old man, and at last he showed his music to his guest, played, and even sang with a frail voice, fragments of his own compositions, and also the whole of Schiller's ballad "Friedolin," which he had set to music. Lavretski praised it, asked him to repeat

parts of it, and when he bid him good-bye invited him to spend a few days with him at Vassilievski. Lemm at once accepted the invitation, and having accompanied his guest into the street, shook hands with him warmly. But when he stood alone in the fresh, cool air, the rosy dawn just beginning to show itself, he looked around, blinked, shrank back, and like some guilty one returned slowly to his room. "I am mad," muttered he to himself, as he lay down on his hard, short bed.

When Lavretski came for him in the carriage, a few days later, he attempted to say he was unwell, but Lavretski went to him in his room, and persuaded him to come. Lavretski had ordered that a piano should be brought to Vassilievski from the town, particularly for Lemm, and this circumstance strongly affected the old man. They went together to the Kaleetins', and spent the evening with them, but not so pleasant an evening as the last had been. Panshin was there, and related many things concerning his journey, and amusingly represented and

imitated the landlords he had seen. Lavretski laughed, but Lemm remained silently in his corner, moved quietly like a spider, gazed stupidly and sadly around, and only became animated when Lavretski rose to take leave, although even after he was seated in the carriage the old man still continued to feel savage and cynical. But the warm, gently-moving air, the light shadows, the smell of the grass, the clumps of birch-trees, the peaceful splendour of the moonless, starry sky, the clatter and snorts of the friendly horses, the whole fascination of the road, of spring, of the night, penetrated the soul of the poor German, and he began to talk to Lavretski.

CHAPTER XXII

LEMM began to speak of music, of Leeza, and again of music. He seemed to pronounce his words more slowly when he spoke of Leeza. Lavretski talked about Lemm's compositions, and half-jestingly offered to write a libretto for him.

"H'm, libretto!" replied Lemm: "no, I cannot do that; I have already lost the animation, the free imagination, which are indispensable for opera. Vigour has forsaken me. If I were able still to do something, a romance would delight me; certainly I should want beautiful words."

He was silent, and sat for a long time without movement, looking at the sky.

"For example," said he at last: "You stars; O, you pure stars."

Lavretski turned and looked at him.

"You stars, pure stars," repeated Lemm, "you look down alike on the innocent and

the guilty ; but only the pure in heart—or something of that kind—understand you, that is, no—love you. But I am no poet ; I am of no use ; but some idea like that, something lofty.”

Lemm pushed back his hat. In the faint light of the clear night his face looked paler and younger.

“ And you also,” he continued in a gradually sinking voice—“ you know who loves, who is worthy to love, because you are pure, you alone are able to soothe. . . . No, that is all ; not as it ought to be. I am no poet, but something like that.”

“ I am sorry that I also am not a poet,” remarked Lavretski.

“ Empty fancies,” rejoined Lemm, and smiled in the corner of the carriage, and shut his eyes as if preparing to go to sleep.

A few moments passed. Lavretski heard the old man whisper, “ Stars, pure stars of love.”

“ Of love,” repeated Lavretski to himself, and became thoughtful and sad.

“ How beautiful the music is, Christopher

Theodoritch, which you composed for Friedolin!" said he aloud. "What do you think? Did this Friedolin, after the Count had presented him to his wife, become her lover?"

"You think thus," replied Lemm, "because doubtless experience" he was suddenly silent, and turned away confused. Lavretski felt compelled to laugh, and also turned away and looked at the road. The stars were already becoming paler, and the sky had begun to grow grey, when the carriage stopped at the steps before the little house at Vassilievski. Lavretski showed his guest to the chamber prepared for him, then returned to the study and sat down before the window. In the garden a nightingale was singing its last song before the dawn. Lavretski remembered hearing a nightingale singing in the garden of Mrs. Kaleetina, and at the same moment he remembered the gentle movement of Leeza's eyes towards the dark window when the first notes of the nightingale's song reached them. He began to think of her, and became more tranquil.

"A pure heart," said he in a low voice ;
 "Pure stars," added he, with a smile.

Lemm sat for a long time on the edge of his bed, with a note-book open on his knees. It seemed as if a sweet melody, such as had never been heard, were about to visit him ; he was agitated and burned ; he already felt the sweetness and lassitude giving tidings of its approach, but he waited in vain. "Neither a poet nor a musician," he whispered at last, and laid his weary head on the pillow.

CHAPTER XXIII

“**M**AESTRO,” said Lavretski next morning, as he and his guest were drinking tea under the limes, “you will soon have to compose a triumphal cantata.”

“Upon what occasion?”

“Upon the occasion of the marriage of Gospodin Panshin and Leeza. Did you notice yesterday how attentive he was? Everything seems to be going smoothly with them.”

“That will never be,” said Lemm energetically.

“Why not?”

“Because it is impossible—although,” added he, pausing slightly—“on earth anything is possible, especially here with you in Russia.”

“We will leave Russia out of the question for awhile. What do you find monstrous in such a marriage?”

"Everything monstrous, everything. Elizabeth Mikaelovna is a just and serious girl, with elevated feelings, but he . . . he is in one word a dee-lai-tant-ai."

"Yes ; but if she loves him ?"

Lemm stood up.

"No, she does not love him ; that is, her heart is so childlike she does not know herself what that means—to love. Frau von Kaleetina tells her he is a nice young man, and she listens to Frau von Kaleetina because she is still a child, although nineteen years old. She prays in the morning, she prays in the evening, and that is very commendable, but she does not love him. She could only love a fine man, and he is not a fine man ; that is, he has not a fine mind."

Lemm spoke all this hotly, and as if by constraint, pacing with short steps to and fro before the tea-table, his gaze wandering over the ground.

"Dearest Maestro," cried Lavretski suddenly, "the idea comes into my head that you yourself are in love with my cousin."

"Please do not make fun of me," said Lemm with unsteady voice. "I am no fool: I am looking into the dark grave, not into the rosy future."

Lavretski was sorry for the old man, and besought his forgiveness.

When they had drunk tea Lemm played his cantata to Lavretski, and after dinner he talked again of Leeza; Lavretski having begun the conversation, listened to him with attention and curiosity.

"What do you think, Christopher Theodoritch?" said he at last: "everything here seems to be now in order, the garden is full of flowers; shall we invite her here to spend the day, with her mother and my old aunt? Would that give you pleasure?"

"Invite," replied Lemm almost inaudibly.

"And it will not be necessary to invite Panshin?"

"Not necessary," replied the old man, with a childlike smile.

Two days later Lavretski rode into the town to call upon Mrs. Kaleetina.

CHAPTER XXIV

HE found them all at home, but he did not at once reveal the object of his visit; he wished first to talk about it with Leeza alone. Chance assisted him; they were left together in the drawing-room. She was already quite at ease when talking with him, and generally she was never embarrassed in any society. Lavretski listened to her, watching her face, and in his thoughts he confirmed the words of Lemm and agreed with him.

It happens sometimes that two people already acquaintances, but knowing little of one another, suddenly and quickly draw nearer together in the course of a few moments, and the consciousness of this is at once expressed by the eye, by the friendly quiet laugh, by their very movements. And this is exactly what happened with Lavretski and Leeza. "How kind

he is!" thought she, looking at him with friendly eyes. "How charming thou art!" thought he. And therefore he was not surprised when she, not without some slight hesitation nevertheless, told him that for a long time it had been in her mind to say something to him, but she feared to make him angry.

"Do not be afraid," said he, standing before her.

Leeza raised her clear eyes to his.

"You are so kind," she began, and at the same time was thinking, "Yes, he is kind." "You will forgive me—I should not dare to speak about this with you—but how could you—why did you leave your wife?"

Lavretski started, glanced at Leeza, then seated himself at her side.

"My child," he said, "please do not touch this wound; your hand is tender, but for all that, it will cause me pain."

"I know," continued Leeza, as though she had not heard what he said, "that she has wronged you—I do not wish to

justify her—but how is it possible to divide what God has joined?”

“Our convictions on that subject are too dissimilar,” said Lavretski somewhat sharply. “We shall not understand one another.”

Leeza paled and trembled slightly, but she was not silent.

“You ought to forgive,” murmured she quietly, “if you wish for forgiveness.”

“Forgive!” cried Lavretski, “You ought first to know for whom you ask forgiveness. To forgive this woman, to take her again into one’s home, this empty, heartless being! And who has told you that she ever wishes to return to me? Pardon me, she is perfectly content with her position. What is there to explain! Her name ought not to be uttered by you; you are too innocent to understand such a being.”

“Why do you condemn her?” said Leeza warmly, the tremble of her hands becoming evident. “It was you who forsook her, Theodore Ivanitch.”

"But I have said," replied Lavretski, with an involuntary outburst of impatience, "you cannot know what creature this is."

"Then why did you make her your wife?" whispered Leeza, lowering her eyes.

Lavretski quickly rose from the chair.

"Why did I marry her? I was young and without experience; I deceived myself, I was attracted by the beautiful exterior; I did not understand women, I knew nothing. God grant that your marriage be a happier one; but, believe me, it is impossible to be sure of it."

"And I may also be unhappy," said Leeza, speaking haltingly and indistinctly. "Then it will be necessary to submit oneself to it. I cannot speak, but if we do not humble ourselves——"

Lavretski's hands gripped one another, his foot struck the floor.

"Do not be angry—forgive me," said Leeza hastily.

At that moment Marie Dmitrievna came into the room, and Leeza rose to go.

"Wait a moment," cried Lavretski un-

expectedly. "I have a great favour to ask of your mother and of you: be my guests in my new home; you know I have a piano there. Lemm is at present staying with me; the lilac is now in blossom. You will breathe the country air, and will be able to return home in the evening. Do you agree?"

Leeza looked at her mother, who put on the air of an invalid; but Lavretski did not give her time to answer—took both her hands and kissed them. Marie Dmitrievna, ever susceptible to a caress, and not expecting such attention from a "walrus," grew kinder and accepted the invitation. Whilst she was considering what day would be suitable, Lavretski approached Leeza, and although still agitated, said quietly, "Thank you, you are a kind girl; I am guilty. . . ."

Her pale face lighted with a gay and modest smile, her eyes also smiled; until that moment she feared she had offended him.

"Vladimir Nikolaiavitch may come with us?" asked Marie Dmitrievna.

“Certainly,” replied Lavretski ; “but will it not be better if we keep the family circle?”

“Yes, but it seems——” began Marie Dmitrievna ; “although as you wish,” added she.

It was decided to take Lena and Shoo-rotchka. Martha Timofaievna would not undertake the journey. “Company wearies me,” said she ; “old bones may be broken ; and you have not, it seems, anywhere to make up a bed for me ; and I sleep uneasily in a strange bed. Let the young people go.”

Lavretski was unable to speak alone with Leeza again ; but his glances reassured her, and she became content, slightly ashamed, and sorry for him. When bidding good-bye, he pressed her hand ; and when alone she became lost in thought.

CHAPTER XXV

WHEN Lavretski returned home, he was met on the threshold of the drawing-room by a tall, thin man, with a wrinkled yet animated countenance, untidy grey whiskers, a long straight nose, rather small bloodshot eyes, and wearing a long blue frock-coat : this was Mikaelaivitch, his former comrade at the University. Lavretski did not at once recognise him, but welcomed him warmly when the other made himself known. They had not met since their student days : exclamations and questions poured forth, and memories long since buried were brought to light ; and with the waving of long arms, the drinking of tea in gulps, and the energetic smoking of pipe after pipe, Mikaelaivitch related his adventures to Lavretski. They were not very gay ones ; he was unable to boast of any great success in his undertakings, but he laughed con-

stantly with his hoarse, nervous laugh. A month ago he was given a place in the private office of a rich farmer living some three hundred versts from the town of O——; and having learnt of the return of Lavretski from abroad, turned aside on his journey in order to see once more his old friend.

Mikaelaivitch talked as impetuously as during his student days—as noisily and excitedly as formerly. Lavretski would have told him of his own plight, but Mikaelaivitch interrupted him, hastily murmuring, “I have heard, brother, I have heard; who could have expected it?” and at once turned the conversation to foresight in general.

“I, brother, must go on to-morrow. To-day, pardon me, we will retire late. I must without fail learn what man thou art, what are thy opinions, convictions—what thou hast become, what life has taught thee. (Mikaelaivitch still used the phraseology of the thirties.) As to myself, I have altered much, brother; life’s waves have broken on

my breast—who said that?—although in the important, the living faith, I have not altered. As always, I believe in goodness and truth ; but I do not only believe—I believe now, yes—I believe, believe ! Thou knowest, I write verses ; there is no poetry in them, but truth there is. I will read thee my last composition. In it I have expressed my most sincere convictions ; listen ! ”

Mikaelaivitch prepared to read the poem. It was rather long, and finished with the following lines :

“ With a whole heart I surrendered to the new feelings,
 In my soul I became as a child.
 And I burnt all those things to which I once bowed,
 Bid adieu to all that I burnt.”

Whilst repeating the two last verses Mikaelaivitch almost broke down, slight convulsions—marks of strong feeling—passed over his wide lips, and his plain face was lighted up. Lavretski listened to him, listened . . . and the spirit of contradiction stirred within him ; the ever-ready, constantly-boiling raptures of the Moscow

student irritated him. A quarter of an hour had not passed before the dispute between them became warm—one of the endless disputes upon which Russians alone are capable of entering. From nothing ; after a separation of many years, passed in two different worlds ; without understanding clearly the thoughts of others, or even their own thoughts, they joined battle about words, and objected with mere words : they disputed about the most uncertain things, and disputed as if the matter were a question of life or death to both of them. They shouted and talked so loudly that every one in the house became alarmed, and poor Lemm, who since the arrival of Mikaelaivitch had shut himself in his room, felt perplexed, and began to fear something, dimly.

“ How art thou after this ?—disenchanted ? ” cried Mikaelaivitch, at one o’clock in the morning.

“ Is it possible that such disenchantments occur ? ” retorted Lavretski ; “ they are always

pale and diseased. If thou wishest it, I will lift thee from the ground with one arm."

"If thou art not disenchanted, thou art a sceptic, and that is still worse (the accent of Mikaelaivitch proclaimed him a native of Little Russia); and by what right art thou a sceptic? We will grant life has treated thee hardly, and without fault of thine: thou wert born with a loving and passionate soul; and thou hast been violently averted from women, the first of whom into whose hands thou hadst fallen was bound to deceive thee."

"And she deceived thee," remarked Lavretski gloomily.

"Granted, granted; I was in this case the instrument of fate. But why do I lie? fate played no part here—merely the old habit of expressing oneself inaccurately. But what does this prove?"

"It proves that since childhood I have been misplaced."

"And thou hast righted thyself—for that thou art a person, a man, by thine own energy. But however that may be, is it

possible! is it permissible! to erect a general law, an immutable rule, upon a private fact——”

“What rule is there in this?” interrupted Lavretski. “I do not acknowledge——”

“No, it is thy rule, rule,” broke in Mikaelaivitch in his turn.

“Thou art an egoist, that is what is the matter,” thundered the latter an hour later. “Thou soughtest self-enjoyment, a life of delights, thou didst want to live only for thyself——”

“What do you mean by self-enjoyment?”

“And everything deceived thee, everything crumbled beneath thy feet.”

“What is self-enjoyment, I ask thee?”

“And it was bound to crumble, since thou soughtest support where it was not to be found, since thou didst build thy house on the quicksand.”

“Speak more clearly and without similes, ‘since’ I do not understand thee.”

“Since—smile if it please thee—since there is no faith in thee, no zealous warmth.

Intellect, nothing but insignificant intellect. Thou art simply a sorry, stranded disciple of Voltaire—that is what thou art.”

“Who? I, a disciple of Voltaire!”

“Yes, such a one as thy father was, and thyself hast not suspected it.”

“After that,” shouted Lavretski, “I have the right to tell thee thou art a fanatic.”

“Alas,” replied Mikaelaivitch, “I have done nothing yet to deserve so honourable a title.”

.

“Now I have found a name for thee,” cried that same Mikaelaivitch at three o’clock in the morning: “thou art not a sceptic, nor yet a disenchanted one, nor a disciple of Voltaire; thou art a drone—a sham drone, not a simple-minded drone, a conscious drone. The simple-minded drone lays itself near the stove and does nothing, because it is not able to do anything, or to think of anything. But thou art a thoughtful being, and thou liest down. Thou art able to do something, yet dost nothing. Thou liest on thy back with a full stomach and talkest,

and that is what is demanded of thee ; because whatever that man does, all is absurd, and leads on to trifles."

"Yes, but why do you assume that I am lying down?" asked Lavretski. "Why do you suppose I am a thinker?"

"And more than that, you all, the whole brotherhood of you," continued the tireless Mikaelaivitch, "are knowing drones. You know with which leg the German limps, you know what is wrong with the English and the French, and for you your sorry knowledge acts as deputy, and justifies your shameful laziness and sordid inaction. Some even are proud of it: 'I, you see, am a knowing one—I lie down; but those fools busy themselves.' Yes! and we have such gentlemen—I am not saying this of thee—who spend the whole of their lives in a kind of dying weariness, accustom themselves to it, sit down in it—like mushrooms in sour cream!"¹ added Mikaelaivitch, and laughed himself at the simile; "this stultifying wear-

¹ Sour cream is much used for making delicious sauces and soups, and for frying fish, etc.

ness is the ruin of Russians. All their lives making preparations to work—repulsive drones ! ”

“ Yes, but why art thou scolding ? ” cried Lavretski. “ To work ! to do ! It would be better if thou hadst told what ought to be done ; but do not scold, thou Poltava Demosthenes.”

“ There, that is what thou wouldst like to know ; that I will not tell thee, brother ; that each one should know of himself,” retorted Demosthenes ironically. “ A landed proprietor, a noble, and does not know what to do ! Hadst thou faith thou wouldst have known ; no faith, no revelation.”

“ Give me at least time to rest, time to look round,” besought Lavretski.

“ Not a minute for repose, not a second,” replied Mikaelaivitch—“ not one second. Death does not wait, and life must not do so.”

“ When and where did people first begin to think them to become drones ? ” cried he at four o’clock in the morning, already somewhat hoarse. “ Here and now in Russia

we are sleeping, when on every individual man lies a duty, a great responsibility, before God, before the people, before himself; and he is sleeping, whilst time is flying."

"Allow me to tell thee," said Lavretski, "we are not sleeping at all—rather say we are denying to others the opportunity to sleep. Like cocks we are stretching our necks; and, listen thou, that is apparently the third one crowing."

This sally caused Mikaelaivitch to laugh, and soothed him. "Till to-morrow," said he, with a smile, and thrust his pipe into his pouch. "Till to-morrow," repeated Lavretski; and the two friends chatted on for another hour, but their voices were not raised again, their words were gentle, sad, kind words.

Mikaelaivitch went away the following day; notwithstanding all Lavretski did to keep him, he could not persuade him to remain, but he talked his fill with him.

Mikaelaivitch, it appeared, had not a rouble with which to bless himself. Lavretski had noticed last evening, with sorrow,

all the signs and habits of confirmed poverty. His boots were much the worse for wear, his coat wanted one button at the back, his hands showed the absence of gloves, and in his hair were bits of down ; upon his arrival he had not thought to ask to wash himself ; and at supper he ate like a sea-dog, tearing the meat with his hands, and biting the bones noisily with his strong black teeth. It appeared also that the civil service had not done much for him, and that the rich farmer was his only hope, and the farmer had engaged him for no other reason than to have an intellectual man in his office. Nevertheless Mikaelaivitch had not lost courage, and lived somehow, an idealist and a poet, sincerely anxious and dejected about the fate of humanity, and troubling little how to prevent himself from dying of hunger. He was not married, but had been in love times innumerable, and wrote verses to all his sweethearts ; he sang with peculiar ardency of one mysterious black-ringleted *Panna*.¹ It is true, there were rumours

¹ Polish = lady, madam.

this *Panna* might be a simple Jewess, well known to many cavalry officers ; but as any one will think, does this make any difference?

Lemm and Mikaelaivitch found few interests in common. The noisy voice and abrupt manners of the latter frightened the German, who was unused to such manner of men. . . . One unfortunate being recognises another unfortunate being at once, and from afar, but in old age rarely welcomes him ; and this is not at all astonishing : he has nothing to share with him—not even hope.

Before he went away Mikaelaivitch had another long conversation with Lavretski ; foretold his ruin if he did not shoulder his load, and besought him to interest himself seriously in the condition of his peasants. He held himself up as an example, saying that he had purified himself in the furnace of misfortune. He several times called himself a happy man, likening himself to the birds of the air, to the lilies in the valley. . . .

“ To a black lily, in any case,” remarked Lavretski.

“ Forget thy aristocratic feelings, brother,” said Mikaelaivitch, good-humouredly ; “ better that thou didst thank God that some honest plebeian blood runs in thy veins. But I see thou hast need now for some innocent, angelic being who should lift thee out of thy apathy.”

“ Thank you, brother,” said Lavretski, “ I have had enough of those heavenly creatures.”

“ Silence, ceenic ! ” cried Mikaelaivitch.

“ Cynic,” corrected Lavretski.

“ Ceenic, exactly,” repeated Mikaelaivitch unconcernedly. Even when seated in the light waggon, into which had been placed his flat, yellow, and strangely light port-manteau, he still talked, wrapped in a kind of Spanish mantle, with a rusty collar, and lion’s paws instead of hooks ; he still unfolded his views of the destiny of Russia, waving his brown hands in the air, as if he were sowing broadcast the seeds of its future prosperity. At last the horses started. “ Remember my three last words,” shouted he, raising his whole body out of the vehicle,

and standing uncertainly : "religion, progress, humanity. . . . Farewell !" and his head, the cap pulled down over his eyes, vanished. Lavretski remained alone on the steps, gazing steadfastly along the road until the waggon was out of sight. "Perhaps he is right," he thought, as he returned into the house ; "perhaps I am a drone."

Many of the words of Mikaelaivitch insistingly entered his soul, although he had disputed, and had refused to agree with him. Let a man be unselfish, no one is able to repulse him.

CHAPTER XXVI

TWO days later, Marie Dmitrievna came with her young folks to Vassilievski, as she had promised to do. The girls ran at once into the garden, and Marie Dmitrievna went listlessly over the house and listlessly praised everything. She considered her visit to Lavretski to be a mark of great condescension, almost a sin, perpetrated by Kindness. She smiled affably when Anton and Aprakseya, according to the old custom of serfs, approached her hand and kissed it; and in a languid voice, speaking through her nose, asked for a cup of tea. To the great grief of Anton, who had put on a pair of white knitted gloves, tea was served, not by him, but by the newly arrived gentleman, the waged butler¹ of Lavretski, who, according to the old man, did not understand anything about the correct way of serving; but at

¹ Anton, a serf, received no monetary wage.

dinner Anton seized his right, and with feet firmly planted, stood behind the chair of Marie Dmitrievna, yielding his post to no one. It was long since guests had been seen at Vassilievski, and it alarmed and rejoiced the old man ; it was pleasant to him to see that good gentlefolk recognised his master.

And it was not he alone who was agitated that day. Lemm was also excited. He had put on a short snuff-coloured coat with a sharp tail, tightly tied his cravat, and constantly coughing, drew aside with a pleased and affable countenance. Lavretski with pleasure noticed that the friendship between Lemm and Leeza continued to increase, and as soon as she came she took his hand with much friendliness. After dinner Lemm took from a tail pocket a small roll of music, and silently, with compressed lips, placed it on the piano. This was a romance composed by him the previous evening for some old-fashioned German words, addressed to the stars. Leeza at once sat down at the piano and played it. Alas !

the music proved to be confused and unpleasantly strained ; it was evident the composer had striven to express something profound and passionate, but without any result ; the effort had remained as an effort, nothing had moved. Lavretski and Leeza both felt this, and Lemm also understood it ; without a word he replaced his romance in his tail pocket, and in reply to Leeza's offer to play it once again, only shook his head and said significantly, " Now—*basta*," stooped, shrank, and went away.

Towards evening the whole company went to catch fish in the pool, at the bottom of the garden, in which there were many perch and carp. An arm-chair was placed for Marie Dmitrievna near the water, a mat was laid down for her feet, and she was given the best fishing tackle. Anton, as an old and experienced fisherman, offered his services, he enthusiastically put the worms on the hook, patted them with his fingers, spit on them, and even cast the line out, bending gracefully forward the whole of his body. In speaking of the old man to Theodore

Ivanitch that evening, she said in school-girl's French : " There are not now any more people like this one, as there were formerly."

Lemm with the two young girls went farther away, on to the dam, and Lavretski found a place near Leeza.

The fish nibbled unceasingly at the hooks, and the captured fish wriggled in the air, showing now their gold, now their silver sides, the glad shouts of the young girls never ceased, and Marie Dmitrievna herself gave two ladylike and plaintive squeals. Lavretski and Leeza were the least successful of all the fishers, probably because they gave less attention than the others to their floats, which were allowed to come in to the very bank. Around them the tall ruddy rushes were whispering gently, before them shimmered the peaceful water, and they spoke with low voices.

Leeza was standing on a small stage ; she was wearing a white dress drawn in at the waist with a broad white ribbon, a straw hat was hanging from one arm, and with some difficulty she held the fishing-rod in the

other hand. Lavretski was sitting on the trunk of a fallen tree, looking at Leeza—at her regular, somewhat severe profile, at her hair thrust back behind the ears, at her delicate cheeks, which glowed like those of a child—and he was thinking: “How charmingly thou standest before my pool!” She was looking at the water, almost smiling, and her eyes were slightly closed; the shadow of a neighbouring lime tree fell on both of them.

“Do you know,” began Lavretski, “I have pondered much over our last conversation, and I have concluded that you are an unusually kind girl.”

“It was not at all with that intention,” Leeza said, and became confused.

“You are kind,” repeated Lavretski. “I am a rough being, but I feel that all are bound to love you. There is Lemm—even he is simply in love with you.”

Leeza’s eyebrows hardly frowned, but they trembled, and this always happened when she heard anything unpleasant,

“I was very sorry for him to-day,” said

Lavretski hastily, "with his romance which failed; to be young, and not to know how to do it—is bearable; but to have grown old, and lost the strength to do it—that is heavy. And it hurts the more, that we do not feel when the power leaves us; it is difficult to the old man to bear such blows. Take care! you have a bite. They say," added Lavretski after a short silence, "Vladimir Nikolaiavitch has written a very pretty romance."

"Yes," answered Leeza; "it is a trifle, but pleasing."

"And what is your opinion?" asked Lavretski: "is he a good musician?"

"It seems to me he has great ability for music, but so far he has not studied it as it ought to be studied."

"Just so; and as a man, is he a good one?"

Leeza laughed, and glanced quickly at Theodore Ivanitch.

"What a strange question!" cried she, drawing in her line, and throwing it out again.

"Why is it strange? I ask you about him, as one newly come to this part, as a relation."

"How a relation?"

"Yes, it seems I may count myself your cousin."

"Vladimir Nikolaïavitch has a kind heart, he is clever, and mother is very fond of him."

"And you like him?"

"He is a nice man: why should not I like him?"

"Ah," uttered Lavretski, and was silent. A half sad, half amused expression came over his face. His steadfast gaze confused Leeza, but she continued to smile. "Well, God grant them happiness," murmured he at last, as if to himself, and turned away his head.

Leeza blushed.

"You are making a mistake, Theodore Ivanitch," said she—"you think without reason. . . . But does not Vladimir Nikolaïavitch please you?" she suddenly added.

"He does not please me."

"Why?"

"He seems to me heartless."

The smile vanished from Leeza's face.

"You are accustomed to judge people severely," she said after a long silence.

"I do not think so: what right have I to judge others severely, when I myself need their indulgence? or, have you forgotten? But," added he, "did you keep your promise?"

"Which?"

"Did you pray for me?"

"Yes, I prayed for you, and I pray for you every day, but please do not speak lightly about it."

Lavretski assured Leeza that such an idea had not entered his head, that he respected deeply every one's convictions; and then began to speak of religion, of its meaning in the history of humanity, of the significance of Christianity. . . .

"It is necessary to be a Christian," said Leeza, speaking not without an effort, "not in order to recognise here . . . the heavenly ;

there . . . the earthly, but because every one must die."

Lavretski with involuntary astonishment raised his eyes to Leeza and met her glance.

"What word was that you uttered?" said he.

"That word is not mine," she answered.

"Not yours . . . but why did you speak of death?"

"I do not know ; I often think of it."

"Often?"

"Yes."

"No one, looking at you now, would say so, your face is so bright and gay, you are smiling"

"Yes, I feel very gay now," said Leeza simply.

Lavretski felt the wish to take both her hands and press them closely.

"Leeza! Leeza!" cried Marie Dmitrievna, "come here: look what a perch I have caught."

"At once, maman," Leeza answered, and went to her mother ; but Lavretski remained

on the tree trunk. "I talk with her as though I were not a worn-out being," thought he.

When she went away Leeza hung her hat on a branch, and with a strange—almost a tender feeling—Lavretski regarded the hat and its long, somewhat crushed ribbons. Leeza soon came back to him, and again stood on the little stage.

"Why does it seem to you that Vladimir Nikolaiavitch is heartless?" she asked, a few moments later.

"I have told you that I may be making a mistake ; but time will show."

Leeza became thoughtful. Lavretski spoke of his existence at Vassilievski, of Mikaelavitch, of Anton ; he felt a necessity to talk with her, and spoke of everything that came into his mind. She listened so charmingly, so attentively, her rare remarks and expressions seemed to him so simple, so intelligent, and he even told her so.

Leeza was astonished.

"Truly?" murmured she ; "yet I thought that, like my maid Nastia, I had no words

‘of my own.’ Nastia once told her sweetheart, ‘It must be wearisome to thee to be with me ; thou talkest to me so well and I have no words of my own.’ ”

“And God be praised !” thought Lavretski.

CHAPTER XXVII

WHILST thus occupied the evening advanced, and Marie Dmitrievna expressed the wish to return home. The girls tore themselves away from the pool with difficulty, and when all were ready Lavretski announced his intention to accompany his guests to the cross-roads, and ordered that his horse be saddled. When handing Marie Dmitrievna into the carriage he noticed the absence of Lemm, but they were unable to find the old man, who had vanished immediately after the fishing.

Anton, with remarkable energy for his age, smartly closed the carriage door, and sternly cried to the coachman to drive away. The carriage moved; Marie Dmitrievna and Leeza were sitting on the back seat, the two girls and the maid with their backs to the horses. The evening was warm and still, and the windows on both sides were down.

Lavretski rode at a trot, beside the carriage, near Leeza, his one hand laid on the door, the reins laid on the neck of the steadily trotting horse, and occasionally exchanging a few words with the young girl. The sunset glow vanished, night had descended and the air became even warmer. Marie Dmitrievna soon slept, and the two young girls and the maid were also sleeping. The carriage rolled on smoothly and quickly. Leeza leaned forward in the carriage, and the light of the rising moon fell on her face, the gentle, scent-laden evening wind fanned her eyes and cheeks, and she was happy. Her hand rested on the carriage door by the side of Lavretski's hand; and it was well with him. Borne along through the quiet, warm night, his eyes fixed on a kind young face, listening to the young musical voice speaking low, saying simple, kind words, he did not notice when they passed the cross-road. He did not wish to disturb Marie Dmitrievna, but lightly pressed the hand of Leeza and said, "We are friends now, is it not so?" She bowed her head; he

checked his horse ; the carriage rolled away, swaying and plunging gently. Lavretski returned home slowly, the enchantment of the summer night having fallen upon him ; all around him seemed so unexpectedly strange, and at the same time so long ago, so sweetly familiar ; both near and far, and afar was visible ; the eyes were unable to understand much that they saw . . . all was reposing ; young, beautiful life declared itself in the very repose.

Lavretski's horse went unhesitatingly, with measured sway from side to side, its big black shadow accompanying it ; there was something mysteriously pleasant about the stamping hoofs, something merry and marvellous about the shrill cries of the quails. The stars were hidden in a bright mistiness, the growing moon shone with steady brilliancy, its light poured in a blue torrent over the sky, and fell in patches of smoky gold on the thin clouds floating by it. The fresh air brought a slight moisture into his eyes, caressingly touched all his limbs, and rushed in a turbulent stream into his lungs,

Lavretski was delighted, and rejoiced at his own enjoyment. "I am still living," thought he; "I am not yet quite shattered by . . ." He did not finish, did not add by whom or what.

Later he began to think of Leeza : that it was hardly probable she loved Panshin. That if he had met her under other circumstances—God knew what might have been. That he understood Lemm : that "although she had no words of her own"—yes, but that was not true, she had words "of her own." "Do not speak of this lightly," remembered Lavretski. He rode for a long time with bowed head, then sat upright and slowly uttered :

"I have burnt all those things to which I once bowed :
Bid adieu to all that I burnt."

and at once struck the horse with his whip, and galloped without drawing rein till he reached the house. Dismounting, he looked back once more with an involuntary, thankful smile. The night, silent and cradling, enveloped the hills and the valleys ; from afar,

out of its scented depths, God knows whence—from heaven or earth—came the soft, kind warmth.

Lavretski sent a last greeting to Leeza, and hastened into the house.

The following day passed lifelessly enough ; it rained from early morning. Lemm gazed from beneath his brows, compressing his lips more tightly as the day advanced, as if he had vowed to himself never to open them again.

When he retired that night, Lavretski took with him an armful of French journals, to glance over when in bed ; some had already lain for two weeks on the table unread. He began to tear off the wrappers and to glance idly down the columns of each gazette, in which nothing new was to be found. He was already about to thrust them away from him, when he suddenly sprang from the bed as if he had been stung. In a paragraph in one of the papers, M. Jules, who is already known to us, communicated to his readers "grievous news": "The charming, enchanting Moscow lady," he wrote, one of

the empresses of fashion, who so graced the drawing-rooms of Paris, Madame de Lavretski, had died almost suddenly. This news, but too true, had only just reached him—M. Jules. He was, one may say, continued he, a friend of the dead lady . . .

Lavretski dressed himself, went out into the garden and paced backwards and forwards till morning, up and down one of the alleys.

CHAPTER XXVIII

ON the following morning, whilst drinking tea, Lemm asked Lavretski to let him have horses in order that he might return to town. "It is time I began to work again, that is, to give lessons," remarked the old man, "for I am only wasting time here."

Lavretski did not at once answer him ; he seemed to be lost in thought. "Very well," said he at last, "I will go with you."

Without the help of the servant, murmuring angrily, Lemm packed his small portmanteau, and tore up and burned some sheets of music. The carriage was brought round, and Lavretski came from his room, putting into his pocket the gazette of yesterday. Throughout the journey, both Lemm and Lavretski spoke little ; each was occupied with his own thoughts, and each was glad that the other left him in peace ; and they separated rather coldly, which indeed often

happens with friends in Russia. Lavretski accompanied the old man to his cottage ; he alighted, took his portmanteau, and without putting out his hand to his friend (he held his portmanteau before him with both hands), without even looking at him, said in Russian, " Good-bye."

" Good-bye," repeated Lavretski, and ordered the coachman to drive to his rooms. He rented rooms in the town of O—— in case he might want them.

Having written a few letters and dined hastily, he set out for Mrs. Kaleetina's house. In the drawing-room he found Panshin alone, who informed him that Marie Dmitrievna would return in a moment, and at once, with the most joyful affability, began a conversation with him. Until that day Panshin had treated Lavretski not quite with haughtiness, yet with condescension. But Leeza had told Panshin about the excursion to Vassilievski, and had spoken of Lavretski as a fine and intelligent man ; that was sufficient for Panshin—the " fine man " must be routed. He began by paying compli-

ments to Lavretski ; he described the delight with which, in his words, the whole family of Marie Dmitrievna spoke of Vassilievski, and afterwards, according to his custom, cleverly led the conversation round to himself. He began to speak of his work, of his views of life, of the world, of the Government service. Said a few words about the future of Russia ; about how governors ought to be kept in hand ; and here he gaily poked some fun at himself, and added that, amongst other affairs, he had been authorised by the authorities in Petersburg to take measures to make popular the idea of registering the land for the purposes of taxation.

He talked for quite a long time, solved with easy confidence all difficulties, and played with the most important administrative and political questions as a conjurer plays with balls. Such expressions as " That is what I should have done had I been the Government," and " You, as an intelligent man, will at once agree with me," were constantly on his lips.

Lavretski listened coldly to the tirade of

Panshin ; he did not like this handsome, intelligent, and over-elegant young man, with his bright smile, polished voice, and investigating eyes.

Panshin soon guessed, with the quick understanding of the feelings of another, peculiar to him, that he did not give any great pleasure to Lavretski, and making a plausible excuse he left the room ; deciding within himself that Lavretski might be a “ fine ” man, but he was not a pleasant one ; a soured one, and, in a word, “ queer.”

Marie Dmitrievna came in escorted by Gideonovski. Afterwards Martha Timofaievna came in with Leeza, then the other members of the family. Later Mme. Byailin, the music lover, arrived : a small, thin lady, with a handsome, almost childish face, with a wearied expression ; she wore a rustling black dress, thick gold bracelets, and carried a fan of many colours. Her husband came—a red-cheeked, puffed person, with large hands and feet, white eyelashes, and a fixed smile on his thick lips. As guests his wife never spoke to him, but at

home, in moments of tenderness, she called him her "little pig." Panshin returned, and the rooms became very noisy and crowded. So large a company was disagreeable to Lavretski, and Madame Byailin especially angered him by looking at him through her lorgnette. He would have gone away at once, but he wanted to say two words to Leeza alone. For long he was unable to seize a suitable moment, and had to satisfy himself by following with secret delight her glances; and her face had never before seemed to him so noble and kind, the contrast with Madame Byailin being much to her advantage. Madame Byailin constantly moved about on her chair, shrugged her narrow shoulders, laughed coarsely, and at one moment screwed up her eyes, then suddenly opened them widely; whilst Leeza sat quietly on her chair, looked straightly, and did not laugh loudly. The hostess sat down to play cards with Martha Timofaievna, Byailin, and Gideonovski, who played very slowly, continually made mistakes, blinked, and wiped his face with his handkerchief.

Panshin had assumed a melancholy appearance, expressed himself briefly, significantly, and sadly—a portrait of the discretion-artist.

Notwithstanding the request of Madame Byailin, who had continually coquetted with him, he refused to sing his romance ; the presence of Lavretski discomposed him. Lavretski also said little. The peculiar expression of his face astonished Leeza as soon as she entered the room ; she at once felt that he had something to tell her, yet, without knowing why, she feared to question him. At last, when crossing the room to pour out tea, she involuntarily turned her face towards him ; he at once rose and followed her.

“What is the matter with you?” she asked, putting the teapot on the samovar.¹

“Is it possible you have noticed something?” said he.

“You are not to-day as I have always seen you,” replied Leeza.

Lavretski bent over the table.

¹ An urn in which water, for making tea, is kept gently boiling by the slowly burning charcoal, in an internal chamber ; the teapot is placed on the top.

"I wanted," he began, "to tell you something—but it is impossible to do so now. But read this which is marked with a pencil," added he, giving her the gazette he had brought with him. "I ask you to keep it a secret; I will call to-morrow morning."

Leeza was bewildered. Panshin appeared in the doorway. She put the paper into her pocket.

"Have you read *Obermann*, Elizabeth Mikaelovna?" asked Panshin in a melancholy voice.

Leeza answered him at haphazard, and, quitting the room, went upstairs.

Lavretski had returned to the drawing-room and approached the card table. Martha Timofaievna, looking very warm, the strings of her cap untied, began to complain to him of her partner Gideonovski, who, she said, did not know how to lead.

"Evidently card-playing," said she, "is not composing tales."

Gideonovski continued to blink and to mop his face. Leeza returned to the drawing-room and seated herself in a corner.

Lavretski looked at her, but she did not look at him; to both of them it became painful. He read on her face perplexity, and something secretly reproachful. To speak with her, however much he wished it, was impossible. To remain in the same room, a guest amongst other guests, was difficult; he decided to go. When bidding her good-bye, he repeated his intention to come again the following morning, adding, that he relied on her friendship.

"Come," she said, with the same perplexed expression on her face.

Panshin became gay when Lavretski had gone; offered advice to Gideonovski; was amusingly pleasant to Madame Byailin, and at last sang his romance. But he did not look at Leeza or speak with her as formerly; he spoke significantly and with some sadness.

Lavretski again passed the night sleeplessly. He was not sad, he was not agitated, within and without he was calm, but he could not sleep. He did not even remember the time that had gone; he

simply gazed at his own life, his heart beat strongly and evenly, the hours flew past, and he gave no thought to sleep; only occasionally the thought rose to the surface of his mind, "It is all untrue, it is an absurdity," then he steadied himself, bowed his head, and gazed again at his own life.

CHAPTER XXIX

MARIE DMITRIEVNA did not receive Lavretski very kindly when he came to the house on the following day. "Is it to be a habit?" thought she. She did not like him much personally, and Panshin, under whose influence she found herself at present, had last evening praised Lavretski with extreme astuteness and negligence.

As she did not look upon him as a guest, and did not consider it to be necessary to occupy herself with a relation—almost one of the family—it happened that in less than half an hour he was walking with Leeza down an avenue in the garden, with Lena and Shoorotchka playing near them.

Leeza seemed untroubled, but was paler than usual. She took from her pocket the

small folded sheet of the gazette, and held it out to Lavretski.

"It is terrible," said she in a low voice.

Lavretski made no answer.

"But it may be that it is untrue," added she.

"For that reason I asked you to speak of it to none."

Leeza proceeded a few paces.

"Tell me," she began: "you are not grieved? not at all?"

"I do not know myself what I feel," replied Lavretski.

"But you loved her once?"

"I did."

"Deeply?"

"Deeply."

"And her death does not grieve you?"

"She did not die now to me."

"That which you say is sinful . . . Do not be angry with me; you called me your friend—a friend is able to say all. To me truly it is even terrible; yesterday your face was so unkind. Do you remember how, not long ago, you blamed her? She,

even then perhaps, was gone from this world. That is fearful: this is sent to you as a punishment."

Lavretski laughed bitterly.

"Do you think so? . . . I am at least free now."

Leeza shuddered slightly.

"Enough; do not talk like that. Of what use is your freedom to you. It is not of that you need to think, but of pardon. . . ."

"I forgave her long ago," broke in Lavretski, and made a gesture with his hand.

"No, it is not that," exclaimed Leeza, and the blood rushed to her face; "you did not understand me; you must seek forgiveness for yourself."

"Of whom?"

"Of whom? . . . of God! Who except God can pardon us?"

Lavretski seized her hand.

"Ah, Elizabeth Mikaelovna, believe me," cried he, "I have been punished already, I have already atoned for everything, believe me."

"That you cannot know," said Leeza in a low voice. "You have forgotten—just recently, when you spoke with me, you did not wish to forgive her. . . ."

They walked in silence along the avenue.

"And what of your daughter?" asked Leeza, suddenly standing still.

Lavretski started.

"Do not let that trouble you: I have already sent letters in all directions. The future of my daughter, as you call . . . as you say, is assured; do not be uneasy."

Leeza smiled sadly.

"But you are right," continued Lavretski. "What shall I do with my freedom? of what use is it to me?"

"When did you receive the gazette?" said Leeza, without answering his question.

"The day after your visit to Vassilievski."

"Can you mean that you did not even shed one tear?"

"Yes, I was astounded; but of what

use tears? to cry about the past?—and are not mine dry? It was not her sin destroyed my happiness; it but showed to me that happiness for me had not existed: what was there to cry for? Although who can tell?—if I had received the news two weeks before, it is possible I might have been more deeply grieved.”

“Two weeks,” repeated Leeza; “and what has happened in these two weeks?”

Lavretski was silent, and Leeza suddenly blushed more deeply than before.

“Yes, yes, you have guessed,” replied Lavretski suddenly; “during these two weeks I have known what the pure soul of a woman means, and my past has receded still farther from me.”

Leeza was very troubled, and went silently towards Lena and Shoorotchka, who were playing about the beds of flowers.

“But I am contented in that I showed you this gazette,” said Lavretski, following her. “I am already unable to hide any-

thing from you, and I hope you will put the same trust in me."

"Do you think so?" said Leeza, and stopped. "In that case I should be obliged . . . But no, that is impossible."

"What is it? Speak, speak!"

"Truly, it seems to me, I must not do it . . . although," added Leeza, and she turned with a smile to Lavretski, "half-confidence is worthless. Do you know, I received a letter this morning."

"From Panshin?"

"Yes, from him. . . . How did you know?"

"He asks you to be his wife?"

"Yes," said Leeza, looking straightly and seriously into the eyes of Lavretski.

Lavretski in turn looked seriously at Leeza.

"Well, and what answer did you make to him?" said Lavretski at last.

"I do not know what to say," replied Leeza, unclasping her hands and allowing them to fall beside her.

"But you love him?"

"Yes, he pleases me; he seems to be a good man."

"Three days ago you told me the same thing, using the same words. I want to know, do you love him with the strong, passionate feeling which we call love?"

"As *you* understand it—no."

"You are not in love with him?"

"No; and is it necessary?"

"What do you mean?"

"He pleases mother," continued Leeza; "he is kind—I have no objection to him."

"Nevertheless you waver."

"Yes . . . and it may be—you, your words are the cause. Do you remember what you said the day before yesterday? But this is weakness."

"Oh, my child," cried Lavretski suddenly, and his voice trembled, "do not sophisticate and deceive yourself. Do not call the cry of your heart, which does not wish to surrender itself without love, a weakness. Do not undertake so terrible a responsibility before that man, whom you do not love, and to whom you wish to belong——"

"I obey—I do not undertake anything," Leeza tried to say.

"Obey your heart, it alone will tell you the truth," broke in Lavretski; "experience, calculation—all that is vanity and ashes; do not deny yourself the best, the only happiness on earth."

"You say this, Theodore Ivanitch? You married for love—and were you happy?"

Lavretski threw out his arms.

"Oh, do not speak of me; you cannot understand what it is that an inexperienced, misshapenly educated youth is able to mistake for love. Yes, and even thus, why do I calumniate myself? I just now told you I had never known happiness. . . No, I was happy."

"It seems to me, Theodore Ivanitch," said Leeza, lowering her voice (she always lowered her voice when she did not agree with any one, although agitated), happiness on earth does not depend on us——"

"On us, on us, believe me," said Lavretski, taking both Leeza's hands, who became pale and looked at him almost with fear, but

tranquilly. "If only we ourselves do not spoil our lives : to some people marriage for love may bring unhappiness, but not to you, with your steady character, with your clear soul. I beseech you, marry no one without love—as a duty, a renunciation, or what it may be . . . this is but impiety, that but calculation—and still worse. I have the right to say it ; I have paid so dearly for the right. And if your God——"

Only at that moment Lavretski noticed that Lena and Shoorotchka were standing near Leeza, regarding him with mute wonder. He released the hands of Leeza, and saying hastily, "Please forgive me," went towards the house.

"One thing only I ask of you," murmured he, returning to Leeza : "do not decide at once ; wait, reflect on what I have said to you. If even you do not trust me, if you have already decided upon a calculated marriage—and in such case not with Gospodin Panshin, he can never be your husband. It is so, you promise me not to hasten ?"

Leeza wanted to answer Lavretski, but

was unable to utter a word—not because she had decided to hasten, but because her heart was beating too turbulently, and a feeling like to fear had gripped her breath.

CHAPTER XXX

AS he was leaving the house, Lavretski met Panshin, and they greeted one another coldly. Lavretski returned to his rooms and locked himself in. He experienced an emotion such as he had hardly before experienced. It was long since he had found himself in such a plight, since he felt himself to be, as he expressed it, on the very bottom of the river. What had altered the situation? What had brought him to the surface? The most usual, the most unavoidable, although the most unexpected event—death! But he was not thinking so much of the death of his wife, of his own freedom, as of the answer Leeza was to give to Panshin. He felt that during the last three days he had begun to look upon her with other eyes. He remembered how, returning home in the silent night thinking of her, he had said to himself “if”; this “if”

referred to the past, to the impossible, nevertheless it was accomplished, but not as he had supposed—his freedom alone was little.

“She will obey her mother,” he thought, “she will marry Panshin; but even if she refuses him, what difference can it make to me?” Passing before a mirror he half-glanced at his face, and shrugged his shoulders. With such meditations the day passed quickly and evening set in.

Lavretski set out for Mrs. Kaleetina’s house. He went hastily, but as he drew nearer to the house he slackened his pace. Before the door stood the carriage of Panshin. “Well,” thought Lavretski, “I will not be an egoist,” and so thinking entered the house. He met no one, and in the drawing-room was silence; he opened the door and saw Marie Dmitrievna playing piquet with Panshin. Panshin bowed to him silently, and Marie Dmitrievna cried, “What unexpected,” frowning slightly.

Lavretski sat down near her and began to look at her cards.

“Can it be that you play piquet?” said

she with something like veiled disappointment in her voice, and then declared what she had discarded. Panshin had scored ninety, and began politely and calmly to take the tricks, with a severe and dignified expression on his face. It is thus diplomats ought to play. And thus he surely played in Petersburg with some influential worthy, upon whom he wished to impress a favourable opinion of his own soundness and ripeness. "A hundred and one, a hundred and two, hearts, a hundred and three," his voice pronounced in measured tones, and Lavretski was unable to decide with which his voice rang—with reproach, or with self-satisfaction.

"Can I see Martha Timofaievna?" Lavretski asked, noticing that Panshin in a stately manner, in which no trace of the artist was to be found, began to shuffle the cards again.

"I think so ; she is upstairs in her room," answered Marie Dmitrievna ; "inquire."

Lavretski went upstairs and found Martha Timofaievna playing cards ; she was playing "Old Maid" with Nastasia Karpovna. Roski barked at him, but the old ladies

welcomed him, especially Martha Timofaievna, who seemed to be in high spirits.

"Ah! Theo, excuse us," said she; "seat thyself, my son—we are just finishing. Thou hast a wish for jam? Shoorotchka, bring him a jar of strawberries. Thou hast no wish? Well then, seat thyself, but do not smoke; I cannot bear thy tobacco—yes, and it makes Sailor sneeze."

Lavretski hastened to say he had no desire to smoke.

"Have you been downstairs?" continued the old lady. "Whom did you see? Panshin is still showing himself? Did you see Leeza? No? She wished to come to me; yes, and here she is. Speak of an angel. . . ."

Leeza entered the room, and when she saw Lavretski she blushed.

"I have come to see you for a minute, Martha Timofaievna," she began to say.

"Why for a minute?" exclaimed the old lady; "what is the matter with all you young women? Such restless beings! You see I have a visitor: chatter with him, entertain him."

Leeza seated herself on the edge of a chair, raised her eyes to Lavretski, and felt it to be impossible for her to remain silent concerning the result of her interview with Panshin. But how can it be told? She was abashed and embarrassed. Can it be long ago that she made the acquaintance of this man, who goes to church but rarely, and so lightly bears the death of his wife. . . . And now she is already telling to him her secrets. . . . It is true he takes an interest in her; she herself trusts him, and feels attracted by him, but none the less she begins to feel ashamed, exactly as if a stranger had entered her own unsullied, maidenly room.

Martha Timofaievna came to their assistance. "If thou wilt not entertain him," said she, "who will have pity on him? I am, for him, too old; he is, for me, too learned; for Nastasia Karpovna he is too old, to her thou must offer youth."

"In what way can I entertain Theodore Ivanitch?" said Leeza. "If he wishes it, it would be better if I play something on the piano for him," added she hesitatingly.

“Excellent; thou art wise,” replied Martha Timofaievna. “Go, my dear, downstairs, and when thou hast finished return to me. I was left an old maid and offended; I want to play again and win.”

Leeza rose and left the room, Lavretski followed her. As they were going downstairs Leeza stopped.

“What they say is true,” she began; “the human heart is full of contradictions; your example ought to have made me fearful and mistrustful of marriage for love, but I——”

“You refused him?” broke in Lavretski.

“No, but I did not accept him. I told him everything, all that I felt, and asked him to wait. Are you content?” added she with a quick smile, and lightly touching the balustrade ran down the stairs.

“What shall I play to you?” asked she, opening the piano.

“What you wish,” replied Lavretski, and seated himself so that he might look at her.

Leeza began to play, and for a long time did not raise her eyes from her fingers. At last she looked at Lavretski and stopped, so

strange and marvellous his face seemed to her.

“What is it?” she asked.

“Nothing,” replied he. “I am happy, and glad for you, and to look at you makes me glad. Continue.”

“It seems to me,” said Leeza a few minutes later, “if he loved me he would not have written that letter. He would have felt that I could not answer it now.”

“That is not important,” murmured Lavretski. “That you do not love him, that is important.”

“Cease! what are we talking about? Your dead wife is hovering indistinctly before me, and you fill me with fear.”

“How nicely my Leezeta plays, does she not, Vladimir?” Marie Dmitrievna was saying at this moment to Panshin.

“Yes,” replied Panshin, “very nicely.”

Marie Dmitrievna regarded her young partner tenderly, and he assumed a still more serious and preoccupied look, and declared fourteen for kings.

CHAPTER XXXI

L AVRETSKI was not a young man. He was not able to deceive himself long about the feeling Leeza had inspired within him, and on that same day he convinced himself that he loved her, and the conviction brought him little joy. "Is it possible," thought he, "that at the age of thirty-three I have nothing better to do than to surrender my soul to a woman? But there can be no comparison of Leeza with 'that one.' She would not demand degrading sacrifices of me; she would not turn me away from my occupation; she herself would strengthen me for honest, severe labour, and we should both go forward towards some beautiful goal. "Yes," concluded he, "all that is well; but it is ill that she has no wish to come with me. It was not for nothing that she told me I filled her with fear. But

she does not love Panshin—little consolation ! ”

Lavretski went to Vassilievski, but he had not lived there four days when it seemed to him unbearable ; he was also troubled by expectation. The news communicated by M. Jules demanded confirmation, yet he received no letters. He returned to town and spent the evening with the Kaleetins. He could plainly see that Marie Dmitrievna had been roused against him ; but he succeeded in gaining her good graces somewhat by losing fifteen roubles to her at piquet. And he passed about half an hour almost alone with Leeza, notwithstanding that the mother had advised her the previous evening not to be too familiar with the man “ *qui a un si grand ridicule.* ” He found a change in Leeza ; she had become, it seemed to him, more thoughtful ; she chided him for his absence, and asked him if he would go next day to Mass (next day was Sunday).

“ Go,” she said, before he had time to reply ; “ we will pray together for the repose of *her* soul,” and added afterwards that she

did not know what to do—did not know whether or not she had the right to make Panshin wait any longer for her decision.

“Why?” asked Lavretski.

“Because,” said she, “I already begin to suspect what the decision will be.”

She declared that her head ached, and giving the tips of her fingers to Lavretski with some hesitation, went up to her own room.

On the following day Lavretski went to Mass. Leeza was already in the church when he came. She noticed him, although she did not turn towards him. She prayed earnestly, her eyes shone softly, peacefully she bowed and raised her head. He felt that she was praying for him, and a wonderful tenderness filled his soul. He felt as one guilty, yet it was well with him. The decently standing people, the simple faces, the tuneful singing, the smell of the incense, the long slanting beams of light from the windows, the very gloom of the walls and arches, all were speaking to his heart. It was long since he had been in a church, long since he had bowed his head before God.

Even now he uttered no word of prayer, nor did he pray without words—yet, although but for an instant, if not the body, his every thought prostrated itself humbly, and embraced the ground. He remembered how in childhood he prayed each time in church, till once he felt a light, cold touch upon his forehead. “This,” thought he then, “is the guardian angel who accepts me, and puts upon me the seal of the chosen.” He glanced at Leeza. “Thou hast brought me here,” thought he: “heal me also ; heal my soul.” She was still praying silently ; her face to him seemed joyful, and his heart was again softened. He asked for another soul . . . peace, for his own . . . forgiveness.

They met outside the church ; she greeted him with merry and kindly importance. The young grass around the church seemed luminous in the brilliant sunshine, which made vivid the bright dresses and kerchiefs of the women. The sparrows on the walls were chirping, and the bells of the neighbouring churches seemed to fill the sky with their melodious hum.

Lavretski stood with bared head and smiled; a light wind played with his hair, and with the ends of the ribbons on Leeza's hat. He handed Leeza, and Lena, who was with her, into the carriage, distributed what money he had among the beggars, and with peace in his heart went home.

CHAPTER XXXII

PAINFUL days were beginning for Theodore Ivanitch; he was in a continual fever. Every morning he went to the post-office for his letters and papers, and opened them eagerly, yet nowhere did he find anything to confirm, or refute, the fatal rumour. Sometimes he became a villain to himself. "What is this?" thought he. "I wait, as a crow for blood, for certain news of the death of my wife!"

He visited the Kaleetins every day, and there it was becoming less easy for him. The hostess was openly surly with him, received him with condescension; Panshin treated him with exaggerated politeness; Lemm had become a still greater misanthrope, and hardly greeted him; but, worst of all, Leeza seemed to avoid him. When it chanced that he was left alone with her, she showed uneasiness, instead of the

former confidence ; she did not know what to say to him, and he himself felt confused. Leeza, in a few days, had become other than he had known her ; in her movements, her voice, and in her very laugh secret trouble was to be noticed, and an unsteadiness never before to be found.

Marie Dmitrievna, like a true egoist, suspected nothing. But Martha Timofaievna began to watch her favourite closely. Lavretski more than once reproached himself for showing the gazette to Leeza ; he was compelled to admit to himself that there had been somewhat of sedition in his soul, unfavourable to pure feeling. He supposed also that the change in Leeza was the result of her struggle with herself, against her indecision : what answer to give Panshin. One day she brought a book to him, a romance of Walter Scott's, which she had asked him to lend to her.

“ You have read it ? ” said he.

“ No ; I have no time for books now,” she said, and wished to go away.

“ Stay for a moment ; it is so long since

we have been together alone. You fear me?"

"Yes."

"Pardon me, why?"

"I do not know."

"Tell me," he began, "you have not yet decided."

"What do you wish to say?" she murmured, without raising her eyes.

"You understand me."

Leeza suddenly sighed.

"Do not ask me about anything," said she, speaking eagerly. "I know nothing; I do not know myself," and she hurried away.

On the following day, when Lavretski came to Kaleetin House after dinner, he found there all the preparations for early vespers. In the corner of the dining-room, on a square table covered with a white cloth, the sacred image in its gold frame and with its aureole of small dim gems, had already been placed, leaning against the wall. An old servant, in a grey frock-coat and wearing slippers, passed slowly and silently along the room, placed two wax candles in slender

candlesticks before the image, crossed himself, bowed, and silently quitted the room. The unlighted drawing-room was empty. Lavretski approached the dining-room and asked if it was the name-day of some one. He was told in a whisper "No," but that vespers had been arranged for by the wish of Elizabeth Mikaelovna and Martha Timofaievna; that it had been hoped that the miraculous Ikon would be present, but that it had travelled into the country thirty versts to a sick person. The priest soon came, together with the deacons; he was a man already advanced in years, the top of his head was bald, and he coughed loudly in the hall. The ladies immediately issued singly from the library and approached the priest to receive a blessing. Lavretski silently bowed to them, and they bowed silently to him. The priest waited a little, once again coughed and spat, then asked in a low bass voice, "Do you order me to commence?"

"Commence, dear sir," replied Marie Dmitrievna.

He began to put on the vestments ; the sacristan, in surplice, with servility asked for a little charcoal. The smell of incense arose. The maids and men-servants came in from the hall and stopped in a close bunch near the doors. Roski, who never came into the lower rooms, suddenly appeared in the dining-room. They tried to drive him out ; he became frightened, ran in and out, and lay down. A footman seized him and bore him away.

Vespers began. Lavretski, with a strange, almost sad feeling, squeezed himself into a corner. He could not rightly determine what he felt.

Marie Dmitrievna stood in front of all, in front of the chairs ; she crossed herself femininely, negligently, as a great lady—now looking round, now suddenly up to heaven ; it was wearisome to her. Martha Timofaievna seemed to be preoccupied. Nastasia Karpovna bowed herself down to the ground, and stood up again with a sound that somehow seemed modest and soft. Leeza stood without moving, without any

movement ; by the intense look on her face one could divine that she was praying earnestly and ardently. When vespers ended, she pressed her lips to the crucifix and also kissed the big red hand of the priest.

Marie Dmitrievna invited the priest to drink tea. He took off the stole, assumed a somewhat worldly look, and together with the ladies went into the drawing-room. A not very animated conversation was begun ; the priest drank four cups of tea, constantly wiped the bald place on his head, and told, among other things, that the merchant Avoshnikov had given seven hundred roubles to be spent in gilding the dome of the church ; and he also revealed a certain remedy for hay-fever.

Lavretski had seated himself near Leeza, but she was silent, almost severe, and did not once look at him ; it seemed as though she were with intention giving no thought to him ; she had an expression as from some cold, momentous ecstasy within her. Lavretski, he knew not why, wanted to smile,

to say something amusing ; but in his heart was confusion, and at last he went away, secretly perplexed. He was conscious of something in Leeza to which he could not penetrate.

Upon another occasion Lavretski was sitting in the drawing-room, listening to the insinuating and wearisome talk of Gideonovski. Suddenly, not knowing why, he turned and caught a deep, attentive, questioning look in the eyes of Leeza, and that searching look had been fixed upon him ; for the whole of that night Lavretski could not banish it from his mind. He did not love as a youth loves ; to sigh and to languish did not suit him, and Leeza herself did not inspire that kind of feeling ; but love at every age has its suffering—and Lavretski's cup was full.

CHAPTER XXXIII

ONCE, according to his custom, Lavretski was sitting in the drawing-room of Mrs. Kaleetina ; a beautiful evening had set in, following upon an oppressively hot day, and Marie Dmitrievna, forgetting her fear of draughts, ordered that all the windows and doors be opened, and declared her wish not to play cards ; that it would be a sin to play cards on such an evening—one must enjoy nature. Panshin was the only guest, and he, moved by the beauty of the evening, flooded with artistic feeling, yet not wishing to sing before Lavretski, relieved himself with the aid of poetry. He read, but too consciously and with unnecessary definement, a few of the poems of Lermontoff (Pushkin had not then become fashionable)—and suddenly, as if ashamed of his own emotions, he began, with the well-known poem “ Meditation ” as his reason, to blame and to reproach

the rising generation ; and did not lose the opportunity to explain how he would have steered had the command been in his hands. " Russia," said he, " has become separated from Europe ; it is necessary that she should catch the latter up. They assure us that we are young—that is an absurdity : yes, and that with youth we have not the inventive faculty ; X—— himself admits that we cannot even contrive a mousetrap ; therefore it follows that we must borrow from others. We are sick, says Lermontoff—I agree with him ; but we are sick because we have only become half European ; we must cure ourselves with the same instrument with which we wounded ourselves. (The cadaster, thought Lavretski.) We have, continued he, the best heads—*les meilleurs têtes*—of that we have long since convinced ourselves ; all nations are in reality equal ; do but introduce good institutions, and the object is achieved. Perhaps all might be adjusted to the existing condition of the people ; that is our business, the business of the (he all but said, imperial) servants of the people ; but do not be dis-

turbed—in case of necessity the institutions will alter the existence itself.”

Marie Dmitrievna tenderly nodded acquiescence with Panshin. “What a clever man,” thought she, “is conversing with me!”

Leeza, leaning upon the window-sill, was silent; Lavretski also remained silent; Martha Timofaievna, playing cards in the corner with her friend, growled something to herself.

Panshin paced up and down the room and spoke elegantly, but with secret malice; it was evident he was not scolding the whole generation, only a few men he knew.

In a large bush of lilac in the garden a nightingale lived, and his first evening notes rang out in the intervals of the eloquent discourse. The early stars were lighting their fires up in the rosy sky, above the still tops of the lime trees.

Lavretski rose and began to reply to Panshin; a dispute ensued. Lavretski defended the youth and independence of Russia, surrendered himself and his generation as a sacrifice, but stood up for the new men, their convictions and their wishes.

Panshin replied sharply and provokingly, stated that intelligent men must alter everything, and was finally carried away to such an extent that, forgetting his position as a gentleman of the bedchamber and his diplomatic career, called Lavretski a laggard conservative, and even hinted—certainly very obscurely—something about his false position in society.

Lavretski did not become angry, did not raise his voice (he remembered that Mikaelavitch had also called him a laggard—but disciple of Voltaire); and he calmly routed Panshin from every position. He showed to him the impossibility of arrogant somersault-changes, unsupported by knowledge of his native land or real faith in an ideal, even a negative one. He held up as an example his own training, demanded before everything an acknowledgment of the rights of the people, and humility in the presence of it, without which even courage, in the face of a lie, was impossible; and finally he accepted the, in his opinion deserved, reproach for light-headed waste of time and strength.

"That is all excellent," cried ruffled Panshin; "and now that you have come back to Russia, what do you intend to do?"

"Cultivate the land," replied Lavretski; "strive to cultivate so that it shall be impossible to do it better."

"That, without a doubt, is highly commendable," rejoined Panshin, "and I have been told that you have already had great success in this direction; but you will agree with me that not every one is adapted to this kind of occupation."

"*Une nature poétique*," said Marie Dmitrievna, coming to the aid of Panshin, "certainly cannot plough—and then you are called, Vladimir Nikolaiavitch, to do everything *en grand*."

This was too much, even for Panshin; he was confounded, and the conversation collapsed. He attempted to turn it upon the beauty of the star-studded sky, upon the music of Schubert; but everything dropped, and he finally offered to play piquet with Marie Dmitrievna.

"What! on such an evening!" she feebly

replied ; and nevertheless ordered cards to be brought.

Panshin opened the new pack with a crackle, and Leeza and Lavretski, as if by agreement, rose and seated themselves by Martha Timofaievna ; suddenly both felt as if all were so well with them that they feared to remain alone together, and at the same time they both felt that the distress they had undergone these last days had vanished, never to return.

The old lady stealthily and lightly touched the cheek of Lavretski, winked shrewdly, and several times nodded her head and whispered, " Thou didst rout the knowing one ; I thank thee." All in the room settled down in silence ; only the feeble crackling of the wax candles was to be heard, and occasionally the rap of a hand on a table, an exclamation, or a voice giving the value of a card ; whilst through the open window in wide waves, together with the dew-laden air, poured the powerful, even defiant notes of the nightingale's song.

CHAPTER XXXIV

LEEZA had uttered no word during the dispute between Lavretski and Panshin, but attentively followed all they said, and felt herself to be entirely on the side of Lavretski. She occupied herself very little with politics, but the presumptuous tone of the worldly official (he had never till now been so outspoken) repelled her, and his contempt of Russia wounded her. The thought that she was a patriot did not enter the mind of Leeza ; but in her soul she was on the side of the Russian people, and the form of the Russian mind gladdened her. When the bailiff on her mother's estate came to the town, she talked with him quite simply for whole hours, as with an equal, without any sign of condescension.

Lavretski felt all this, and he would not have troubled to reply to Panshin himself—

he spoke for Leeza alone. They said no word to one another, even their eyes met rarely, but both understood that they had come very close together that evening, and they understood that they loved, and did not love, the same things in the same way. In one thing only they wandered apart, but Leeza secretly hoped to lead him towards God.

They were seated by Martha Timofaievna, and seemed to be following the game; and they really did follow her play, but at the same time the heart of each of them swelled in its breast and nothing escaped them. For them the nightingale sang, and the stars were lighted; for them the trees softly whispered, humming a slumber song in their sleep, a song of the soft summer with its gentle warmth.

Lavretski offered no resistance to the wave on which he was borne along—and rejoiced; but words cannot reveal the thoughts which presented themselves to the pure soul of the young girl: they were mysterious to her—let them remain hidden

from all. None knows, no one has seen, or will ever see, how the grain of corn, having been bid to live and fruit, draws sap and ripens in the breast of Mother Earth.

Ten o'clock came. Martha Timofaievna retired with Nastasia Karpovna. Lavretski and Leeza walked across the room, and stood before the open door which led into the garden ; they looked into the dim infinite, then at one another, and smiled ; and it seemed to them as if they had each taken the hand of the other and told of all they had to tell. They turned and walked towards Marie Dmitrievna and Panshin, whose game was dragging itself out ; the last "king" was finished at last, and the hostess rose. Panshin kissed the hand of Marie Dmitrievna, and remarked that nothing now prevented other happy beings from seeking repose, or enjoying the summer night, but that he must sit till morning conning foolish documents : he coldly bid adieu to Leeza and departed (he had not expected that Leeza would ask him to wait for an answer to his offer, and was

therefore displeased with her). Lavretski followed him out of the house ; they parted at the gateway. Panshin poked his coachman in the neck with the end of his cane, woke him, and was driven away. Lavretski did not wish to go home, and he walked out of the town into the open country. The night was still and bright, although there was no moon, and Lavretski wandered for a long time over the dew-laden grass, and at last happening upon a narrow foot-path he followed it. It led him to a wicket in a long fence ; he tried, not knowing why, to push the gate ; it creaked feebly and opened, as if it were awaiting his hands. Lavretski passed into the garden, took a few steps down an avenue of lime trees, and suddenly stood in astonishment : he recognised the garden of Mrs. Kaleetina. He at once moved to a dark spot, the shadow of a thick hazel bush, and stood for a long time wondering and shrugging his shoulders.

“ This is not chance,” thought he.

All was silent around him, no sound came

from the house. He went forward carefully, and from a bend in the avenue the dark front of the house was visible. A feeble light shone from two of the windows; behind the white curtains in Leeza's room a candle was burning, and in the bedroom of Martha Timofaievna, before the Ikon, the red flame of the little lamp burnt steadily, and was reflected by the gold frame. Downstairs, the door leading to the balcony was wide open.

Lavretski seated himself on a wooden bench, leaned on one hand and gazed at the door and at the window of Leeza's room; a clock in the town tolled midnight, then in the house a small clock struck twelve faintly, and the watchman struck his board. Lavretski did not think of anything, did not expect anything; it was pleasant to him to feel himself near Leeza, to sit in her garden, and on the bench on which she sat so often. The light which had been in Leeza's room vanished.

"Good-night, my sweetheart," whispered Lavretski, who continued to sit motionless,

without taking his gaze away from her window. Suddenly a light shone from one of the windows on the ground floor, passed on to another, to a third—some one was going through the rooms with a light. "Can it be Leeza? impossible!" . . . Lavretski stood up—he caught a glimpse of the familiar face, and Leeza appeared in the drawing-room. She wore a white dress, and her hair in loose plaits fell over her shoulders; she noiselessly approached the table, bent over it, put the candlestick down and sought for something; then, turning towards the garden, she approached the open door, and all in white, a gentle, gracious figure, stood on the threshold.

A shiver passed through the limbs of Lavretski.

"Leeza!" the word, scarcely audible, was torn from his lips.

She shuddered, and looked into the darkness.

"Leeza!" repeated Lavretski more loudly, and stepped out of the darkness of the avenue.

Leeza looked towards him fearfully and stepped backwards; she had recognised him. He called her a third time, and put out his hand towards her. She left the door and came forward into the garden.

"You," said she in a low voice, "you, here!"

"I—I. . . . Hear me," whispered Lavretski, and seizing her hand, led her to the bench.

She went with him without hesitation; her pale face, fixed eyes, and all her movements expressed untold astonishment. Lavretski, when he had led her to the bench, stood before her.

"I did not think to come here," he began. "It brought me. . . . I—I—I love you," and his voice unwillingly showed the fear he felt.

Leeza slowly turned her eyes towards him; it seemed as if only at that moment she understood where she was and what had happened; she wished to rise, but was not able to, and covered her face with her hands.

•

“Leeza,” said Lavretski—“Leeza,” he repeated, and knelt at her feet.

Her shoulders began to shake, and the fingers of her pale hands were pressed more closely to her face.

“What is it?” murmured Lavretski; and he was answered by the sound of gentle sobbing; his heart ceased to beat—he understood the meaning of those tears.

“Is it possible you love me?” he whispered, and touched her knees.

“Stand,” came from her lips. “Stand, Theodore Ivanitch. What are we doing here—you and I?”

He rose and seated himself by her side. She had ceased to cry, and attentively looked at him with her tearful eyes.

“What we are doing is terrible to me,” she repeated.

“I love you,” said he again. “I am ready to surrender to you the whole of my life.”

She again shuddered as if something had stung her, and looked upwards into the sky.

"All will be as God wishes," she murmured.

"But you love me, Leeza? We shall be happy."

She looked down; he gently drew her to him, and her head fell on his shoulder. He turned his head slightly and touched her pale lips.

.
Half an hour later Lavretski stood again before the garden gate. He found it locked, and was compelled to spring over the fence. He returned into the town, and walked along the sleeping streets. An unexpected feeling of deep joy filled his heart; all his doubts were sleeping. "Vanish, Past! Dark Phantom!" thought he. "She loves me; she will be mine."

Suddenly it seemed to him, that in the air, above his head, he heard marvellous, triumphant sounds. He stopped; the sounds vibrated still more grandly; they poured down in a strong melodious stream, and in them it seemed to him was told and sung all his happiness. He looked around; the

sounds were thronging from the two upper windows of a small house.

“Lemm!” cried Lavretski, and ran to the house. “Lemm, Lemm!” repeated he loudly.

The sounds ceased to flow, and the figure of the old man in a dressing-gown, his chest bare, his hair in disorder, appeared at the window.

“Ah,” said he, with dignity, “it is you!”

“Christopher Theodoritch, what miraculous music is that? For God’s sake let me in.”

The old man, without saying a word, with a magnificent sweep of his arm, flung the key of the front door out through the window. Lavretski ran swiftly up the stairs, entered the room, and wished to throw himself at Lemm; but the latter imperiously pointed out to him a chair, saying abruptly, “Be seated, and listen.” He himself sat down at the piano, glanced round severely and proudly, then began to play.

It was long since Lavretski had heard anything like it. With the first notes a

sweet and passionate melody enveloped his heart ; it was all-radiant with inspiration, with joy, and with beauty ; it was overwhelming ; it grew and melted away ; it was touched with everything that is dear, secret, and holy on earth. It breathed immortal sadness, and flowed away to die in heaven. Lavretski, chilled and pale with emotion, stood up and straightened himself. These sounds had so gripped his soul, which but now had been agitated by the happiness of love ; they flamed with love.

“ Repeat it,” he whispered, as the sound of the last note died away.

The old man cast an eagle glance at him, struck his chest with one hand, and said slowly in his native tongue, “ I composed that because I am a great musician,” and he played once more his miraculous composition.

There was no candle burning in the room, but the light of the rising moon fell slantingly through the open window ; sonorously palpitated the delicate air. The small pale room seemed to be a sanctuary, and the head

of the old man was lifted loftily in the silvery twilight as if inspired. Lavretski approached him and embraced him. At first Lemm did not reply to his embrace—even pushed him away with his elbow. For long he did not stir a limb, but gazed severely, almost savagely, and twice growled “Ah!” At last his transfigured countenance became more composed, and in answer to the warm congratulations of Lavretski, he first smiled and then began to cry, sobbing feebly like a child.

“It is wonderful,” said he, “that you came here just to-night; but I know—I know all.”

“You know all?” uttered Lavretski agitatedly.

“You heard me,” retorted Lemm. “Is it possible you did not understand that I know all?”

Lavretski was unable to sleep until morning: all night he sat on the bed. And Leeza also did not sleep; she prayed.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE reader knows how Lavretski grew up and developed, and we will say a few words about the upbringing of Leeza.

She was ten years old when her father died, but he had occupied himself very little about her, having been buried in his business, and constantly anxious about the growth of his wealth ; and though ill-tempered, caustic, impatient, he did not grudge the money necessary for teachers, governesses, clothes, and other things for the children ; but he could not bear, as he expressed it, “ to nurse howling children,” besides, he had not time for nursing. He worked, was borne along by his affairs, slept little, rarely played cards, and worked again ; he likened himself to a horse harnessed and connected to a threshing machine. “ How quickly my life has galloped past ! ” he said, with a bitter smile on his dry lips, when he was on his death-bed.

Marie Dmitrievna, in reality, occupied herself but little more than her husband about Leeza, although she had boasted to Lavretski that she alone had brought up her children. She dressed Leeza like a doll, when guests were present stroked her head and called her "Heartlet" and "Clever one"—and nothing more: every constant duty fatigued the lazy noble.

During the life of her father, Leeza was left to the care of a governess, Mademoiselle Moreau, from Paris; and after his death she came under the charge of Martha Timofaievna.

Mademoiselle Moreau was a tiny, wrinkled being, with bird-like manners and bird-like brains. In her youth she had led a very disordered life; approaching old age but two passions remained—one for delicate morsels, the other for cards. When she was sated, she did not play cards, and did not chatter; her face at once assumed an almost cadaverous expression; she sat, looked, breathed, but it was evident no thought of any kind passed through her mind.

It was not possible to call her kind—kind birds do not exist. It might have been the consequence of the light life she led in her youth, or the result of breathing the air of Paris in her childhood, that caused to lodge within her a kind of general and cheap scepticism, usually expressed with the words, *tout ça c'est des bêtises*. She spoke French inaccurately, but the pure Parisian jargon; did not gossip, and did not sulk. What more can be wished for in a governess? She exerted very little influence upon Leeza, who was therefore the more powerfully influenced by the convictions of her nurse, Agafa Vlasevna.

The life of this nurse was remarkable. She was of a peasant family, and at the age of sixteen married a peasant, but she stood out sharply among her sister peasants. Her father, who was for twenty years the village elder, amassed money and spoiled her. She was more than usually beautiful, dressed better than any one in the neighbourhood, and was intelligent, eloquent and bold.

Her noble owner Dmitri Pestov, the father of Marie Dmitrievna, a modest and peaceful man, saw her once, at work with the threshing party, talked to her, and fell violently in love with her. She soon became a widow ; and Pestov, although married, brought her into the house, dressing her as one of the household. Agafa at once adapted herself to her new position, as if she had never lived otherwise. She became paler and stouter ; her arms under the muslin sleeves became "like flour," like the arms of a merchant's wife. The samovar stood on the table all the day long ; she wished to wear only silk and velvet, and she slept on a bed of down.

For five years this glorious life continued ; but Dmitri Pestov died. His widow, a kind lady, respecting the memory of the dead man, did not wish to act dishonourably towards her rival, and the more so since Agafa had never forgotten herself in her presence ; so she was married to a cowman and sent away out of sight. Three years

had passed away when, on a hot summer day, the mistress visited her cowyard; Agafa regaled her with such cool, delicious cream, behaved herself so modestly, and was so clean, gay and contented, that the mistress announced her intention to pardon her, and to permit her to enter the house again. In the course of six months she became so attached to Agafa, that she promoted her to stewardess, and handed over to her the management of all her affairs. Agafa was again in authority, and again she flourished and her skin became whiter; the mistress trusted her completely. Thus passed five more years. Misfortune for the second time befell Agafa. Her husband, whom she had brought into the house as a lackey, began to drink; articles from the house began to disappear, and finally he stole six silver family spoons and hid them—till wanted—in the box of his wife. The affair was brought to light. He was again turned into a cowman, and Agafa was disgraced; she was not driven out of the house, but she was dismissed

from the stewardship, turned into a seamstress, and ordered to wear a kerchief in place of a cap.

To the wonderment of all, Agafa bore this terrible blow with respectful humility. She was then already thirty years old, all her children had died, and her husband did not live much longer. The time had come for her to begin to think seriously, and she saw herself as she had been. She became very silent and prayerful, was never absent from matins, or Mass, and gave away all her fine dresses. Thus she passed fifteen more years, humbly, peacefully, seriously ; quarrelled with none, gave way to all ; if any one spoke harshly to her, she bowed and thanked that one as her teacher. The mistress had long since pardoned her, taken from her the disgrace, given to her the cap from off her own head ; but Agafa had no wish to lay aside the kerchief she wore and always with a dark dress.

After the death of her mistress she became still quieter and lowlier. A

Russian fears and attaches himself to another easily, but it is difficult to command his esteem, he gives it slowly and only to a few ; all in the house esteemed Agafa ; none thought of her former sins—as if they had buried them in the earth together with the old noble.

Having made himself the husband of Marie Dmitrievna, Kaleetin would have deputed to Agafa the management of the household, but she refused “because of the temptation” ; he was angry with her, she bowed low and quitted the room. Clever Kaleetin knew people ; he understood Agafa and did not forget her ; when the family came to live in the town, he, with her consent, attached her as nurse to Leeza, who was then five years old.

The serious and severe face of the new nurse at first frightened Leeza, but she soon accustomed herself to Agafa and loved her deeply. She was herself a serious child ; her features brought to mind the sharp, regular features of Kaleetin, but her eyes were not like his—they were

lighted up with kindness and calm attentive-ness, which is rare in children; she did not care to play with dolls; she kept herself carefully and did not laugh loudly or long; she was rarely pensive, and even then nearly always usefully so; having been silent for a short time, she usually broke the silence by turning to some one of the elders with a question, showing that her mind had been working under a new impression. She early ceased to speak indistinctly, and already when four years old spoke clearly. She feared her father; and her feeling towards her mother was undefined—she did not fear her, neither did she seek caresses from her; but even from Agafa she did not seek caresses, although she was the only one she loved. Agafa never allowed her to be out of her sight, and it was strange to see these two together. It often happened that Agafa, all in black, a dark kerchief round her head, with her thin, wax-like but still handsome and expressive face, was sitting upright and knitting stockings; at her feet

in a small chair Leeza sat, also occupied with some kind of work, or listened seriously, her bright eyes raised, to that which Agafa was relating. And it was not tales the nurse was telling ; with a measured, level voice she was telling of the life of the Precious Virgin, of the lives of hermits, of the saints, and of the holy martyrs ; she was telling Leeza how pious people escaped and lived in deserts, bearing hunger and want ; and not fearing kings, confessed Christ ; how the heavenly birds brought food to them, and the wild beasts obeyed them ; how flowers grew up on the places where their blood was shed—"Gilliflowers ?" once asked Leeza, who was very fond of flowers. . . . Agafa spoke with Leeza seriously and humbly, as if she herself felt that it could not be she who uttered such lofty and sacred words. Leeza listened to her—and the image of the all-knowing, everywhere-existing God forced itself with a kind of irresistible gentleness into her soul, and filled it with a wholesome venerating fear, and Christ became for her a kind of

intimate acquaintance, almost a relation ; and it was Agafa who taught her to pray. Sometimes she woke Leeza early, at dawn of day, hastily dressed her and led her secretly to matins. Leeza followed her on tiptoe, scarcely breathing ; the cold and the dim light of morning, the freshness and emptiness of the church, the very secretness of these unexpected absences from home, the cautious return into the house, into bed, all this mixture of the forbidden, the strange, the sacred, agitated the little girl and penetrated to the very foundation of her being. Agafa never judged another, nor scolded Leeza for light-heartedness. When it happened that she was dissatisfied, she was silent, nothing more, and Leeza understood this silence ; and with the quick perception of a child she also well understood when Agafa was dissatisfied with others—was it Marie Dmitrievna, or Kaleetin himself.

For a little over three years Agafa had charge of Leeza ; then Mademoiselle Moreau took her place, but the light-headed French-

woman, with her lifeless manners, and cries of "*Tout ça c'est des bêtises*," was unable to drive her beloved nurse out of the heart of Leeza. The sown seed had thrust its roots too deeply, and although Agafa had ceased to have charge of Leeza, she remained in the house, and frequently saw her pupil, who trusted her as she had done formerly.

Agafa, strangely, did not long agree to live with Martha Timofaievna when the latter came to live in Mrs. Kaleetina's house. The austere seriousness of the former "mistress" did not please the impatient and strong-minded old lady. Agafa asked permission to go on a pilgrimage, and never returned. Dark rumours went about that she had gone away to some community of dissenters, but the impressions left by her on the mind of Leeza were never effaced. She went to Mass as formerly, as to a feast, prayed with delight, with a kind of abashed and restrained ecstasy, at which Marie Dmitrievna was secretly not a little astonished; and even Martha Timofaievna herself, although she did not in any way embarrass Leeza, never-

theless endeavoured to moderate her zeal, and did not allow her to bow herself to the ground unnecessarily—this habit was not aristocratic.

Leeza learnt well, that is to say perseveringly. God had not given her great intelligence or particularly brilliant abilities ; without labour she did not succeed in anything. She played the piano well, but Lemm alone knew what it had cost her to do so. She did not read much, she had not “her own words,” but she had her own thoughts, and she went her own way. She did not without reason resemble her father ; he also did not ask of others what he should do. Thus she grew up, peacefully and without haste ; thus she reached her nineteenth year. She was, unknown to herself, very charming. Her every movement expressed involuntary, slightly awkward grace, her voice rang with the silver tone of undisturbed youth. The slightest feeling of pleasure brought an attractive smile to her lips, and added a deep lustre and a kind of secret caress to her lighted-up eyes. Altogether penetrated with

the feeling of duty, with the fear to offend whomsoever it might be, with a heart kind and tender, she loved all without loving any particular one. God alone she loved rapturously, timidly, tenderly. Lavretski was the first to break into her peaceful inner life. Such was Leeza.

CHAPTER XXXVI

ON the following day, at twelve o'clock, Lavretski set out for Mrs. Kaleetina's house. On the way he met Panshin, who galloped past him on horseback, his hat pulled down over his very eyebrows.

At Mrs. Kaleetina's, Lavretski, for the first time since he had become acquainted with them, was not admitted. The lackey informed him that Marie Dmitrievna was resting. " ' They ' ¹ have a headache." Martha Timofaievna and Elizabeth Mikaelovna were not at home. Lavretski walked on past the garden with a confused hope of seeing Leeza, but he saw no one. He returned again to the house two hours later, and received the same answer, and the lackey somehow regarded him from the corners of his eyes. It seemed to Lavretski that it

¹ Servants never use "he" or "she" when speaking of any one in a better position than themselves, always "they."

would be unseemly to call again the same day for the third time, and he decided to ride out to Vassilievski, where he had business. On the way he constructed different plans, each more excellent than the last, but in the village of his aunt sadness fell upon him. He entered into a conversation with Anton. The mind of the old man, as if intentionally, was full of sad thoughts. He told Lavretski how Glafeera Petrovna, just before death, had bitten her own hand, and he said with a sigh, after being silent for a moment, "Every one, dear sir and master, is given to devouring himself."

It was already late when Lavretski set out on the return journey. Memories of yesterday enwrapped him, the image of Leeza rose up in his mind in all its gentle clearness, and he was deeply moved by the thought that she loved him; and thus, peaceful and happy, he drove up to his little house in the town. The first thing that astonished him when he entered the hall was a smell of patchouli, to him a most repulsive scent; also some high trunks and boxes were standing here. The

expression on the face of the valet who hastened forward to meet him seemed to him strange. But without giving to himself any explanation of his impressions, he crossed the threshold of the drawing-room. . . . A lady in a black silk dress with flounces, and holding a batiste handkerchief to her pale face, rose from the sofa to receive him, came forward a few steps, bowed her carefully dressed and perfumed head, and fell at his feet. It was only now that he recognised her : this lady was—his wife.

Something gripped his breath—he leaned against the wall.

“Téodore, do not drive me away,” said she, speaking French, and her voice cut into his heart like a knife. He glanced at her without understanding, yet at once mechanically noticed that she was paler and stouter.

“Téodore,” she continued, glancing upward from time to time, and twisting carefully her remarkably beautiful fingers, with their rosy, polished nails—“Téodore, I am guilty before you, deeply guilty—I will say more; I am a criminal, yet hear me out.

Repentance torments me. I have become a burden to myself, and I am no more able to bear my position. How many times have I thought to address myself to you, but I feared your anger. I have resolved to break off every tie with the past. Then I have been so ill, *J'ai été si malade*," she added, passing her hand over her forehead and cheek. "I took advantage of the rumour of my death, which was spread about, I abandoned all, and, staying nowhere, by day and night I have hastened hither. I hesitated for long to present myself before you, my judge, *paraître devant vous, mon juge* ; but at last I made up my mind, remembering your constant goodness, to come to you, and in Moscow I discovered your address. Believe me," she continued, noiselessly rising from the floor and seating herself on the very edge of a chair, "I have often contemplated death, and I should have found within me enough courage to take my life—ah! life is for me now an insupportable period—but the thought of my daughter, of my little Ada, stayed my hand. She is here—she is sleeping ,

in the next room, the unfortunate child ! She is weary—you will see her ; she at least is innocent before you. But I am so unhappy, so unhappy,” cried Madame Lavretski, and burst into tears.

Lavretski at last became himself, stood up, away from the wall, and turned towards the door.

“ You are going away !” said his wife in a heart-rending voice. “ Oh, that is harsh, without saying one word to me, not even one reproach. . . . This contempt crushes me, it is terrible.”

Lavretski stopped. “ What is it you want to hear from me ?” uttered he in a toneless voice.

“ Nothing, nothing,” she replied hastily. “ I have not the right to demand anything. Believe me I am not unreasonable ; I do not hope, I do not dare to hope for your pardon. I am only emboldened to ask you to command me what to do, where to live. I am but a slave ; I will fulfil your command, whatever it may be.”

“ It is not for me to command you in

anything," replied Lavretski in the same voice. "You know—all is finished between us . . . and now more than ever. You are able to live wherever you wish, and if your allowance is little for you . . ."

"Ah! do not speak such terrible words," broke in Barbara Paulovna; "have pity on me, although . . . if only for the sake of that angel," and having spoken these words, Barbara Paulovna rushed impetuously into the other room and at once returned with the little girl in her arms, very elegantly dressed. Large fair curls fell over her pretty dark face, and large black sleepy eyes; she smiled and frowned in the light, and supported herself with a little dimpled hand on her mother's neck.

"Ada, look! it is thy father," said Barbara Paulovna, pushing back the curls from the child's eyes, and kissing her loudly; "beseech him with me."

"That is papa?" lisped the little girl, speaking indistinctly.

"Yes, my child. You love him—is it not so?"

It had become more than Lavretski could bear. "In what melodrama is there just such a scene?" he muttered, and quitted the room.

Barbara Paulovna stood for a few moments on the same spot, then slightly shrugged her shoulders, carried the little girl into the other room, undressed her and put her to bed. Afterwards she found a book, seated herself by the lamp, waited for about an hour, then went to bed herself.

"Is it well, Madame?" asked the French maid, brought by her from Paris, whilst removing her corsets.

"Well, Justine," replied she, "he has aged much, but it seems to me he is still the same kind creature. Give me my night gloves, and prepare me for to-morrow the all-grey costume. Yes, and do not forget some mutton cutlets for Ada; it is difficult to get them here, but you must try."

"*A la guerre comme à la guerre,*" replied Justine, and put out the light.

CHAPTER XXXVII

L AVRETSKI wandered about the streets for more than two hours. The night passed in the suburbs of Paris came into his mind. His heart beat painfully, and in his empty and as if numbed head, swirled always the same dark, angry, wicked thoughts. "She is alive! she is here!" he whispered, with constantly renewed astonishment. He felt that he had lost Leeza. The bitterness suffocated him, this blow had fallen upon him too suddenly. How was he able to believe so easily an absurd gossiping gazette, a rag of paper? "Yet if I had not believed it," thought he, "what would be the difference? I should not have known that Leeza loved me—she herself would not have known it." He could not drive away from him the image of his wife, her voice, her glances . . . and he cursed himself, cursed everything on earth.

Overcome by fatigue, he came before morning to Lemm's house. For long he was unable to make any one hear ; at last the head of the old man in a nightcap appeared, sour and frowning at the window ; already quite unlike that inspiringly austere head, which twenty-four hours ago, from the full height of his artistic splendour, looked down as an emperor on Lavretski.

"What do you want?" asked Lemm. "I am not able to play to you every night. I have taken a decoction..." But evidently Lavretski's countenance appeared very remarkable ; the old man put up his hands over his eyes as a shade, gazed at his nocturnal visitor, and admitted him.

Lavretski entered the room and dropped into a chair ; the old man stopped before him enveloped in his bright, well-worn dressing-gown, screwing up and projecting his lips.

"My wife has come," said Lavretski, and he raised his head and suddenly laughed involuntarily.

Lemm's face expressed astonishment, but

he did not smile, only folded himself more tightly in his robe.

"You did not know," continued Lavretski, "I imagined . . . I read in the gazette that she was no longer on earth."

"Oh, you read that not long ago?" asked Lemm.

"Not long ago."

"Oh," repeated the old man, and raised high his eyebrows; "and she has arrived?"

"She has arrived; she is now in my house, and I . . . I am an unhappy man."

And again he laughed.

"Christopher Theodoritch, will you undertake to deliver a note?"

"H'm! may I ask to whom?"

"Elizab——"

"Ah, yes, yes; I understand—it is well; and when is it necessary to deliver the note?"

"To-morrow as early as possible."

"H'm! Is it possible to send Katerina, my cook? No, I will go myself."

"And you will bring the answer to me?"

"I will bring the answer."

Lemm sighed.

“Yes, my dear young friend, you are, exactly, an unhappy young man.”

Lavretski wrote a few words to Leeza ; he told her of the arrival of his wife, and asked her to grant him an interview, then threw himself on the narrow sofa with his face to the wall ; and the old man lay down on his bed and turned about for a long time, coughing and sipping his decoction.

The morning came ; both of them rose up ; with questioning eyes they regarded one another. Lavretski at that moment had the wish to kill himself.

Katerina, the cook, brought them some bad coffee. It struck eight o'clock ; Lemm put his hat on and went out, saying that he is giving a lesson to Lena Kaleetina at ten o'clock, but that he will find some reasonable excuse for appearing so early.

Lavretski again threw himself on to the little sofa, and again to the bottom of his heart he began to be stirred by painful mirth. He was thinking of how his wife had driven him from his house ; then he

represented to himself the position of Leeza, shut his eyes and clasped his hands behind his head.

At last Lemm returned, and brought for him a folded bit of paper on which Leeza had written with a pencil the following words :

“ We cannot see one another to-day ; it may be possible to-morrow evening.—Good-bye.”

Lavretski thanked Lemm shortly and absently, and went away to his own house.

His wife was having breakfast. Ada, all curls, in a white frock with blue ribbons, was eating a mutton cutlet.

Barbara Paulovna at once stood up, as soon as Lavretski entered the room, and with humility on her face, approached him. He asked her to follow him into the library, closed the door after him and began to walk to and fro. She seated herself, modestly laying one hand on the other, and set herself to follow him with her eyes, which although slightly underlined, were still quite beautiful.

For a long time Lavretski was unable to begin to speak. He felt that he could not

control himself; he saw clearly that Barbara Paulovna had no fear of him; yet she presented the appearance of one about to faint.

"Listen, madam," he began at last, breathing painfully and from time to time setting his teeth: "there is no reason for us to pretend before one another. In your penitence I do not believe: and even if it were sincere, to start again hand in hand, to live with you, is for me impossible."

Barbara Paulovna pressed her lips together and frowned. "That is aversion," thought she; "certainly to him I am not even a woman."

"Impossible," repeated Lavretski, and buttoned up his coat to the collar. "I do not know why it has pleased you to come here: probably you have no more money."

"Ah, you do me an injury," whispered Barbara Paulovna.

"However that may be, you are none the less, I am sorry to say, my wife. I cannot drive you away . . . and this is what I offer you. You can to-day, if it please you, set out for Lavreok, live there; there, as

you know, is a good house ; you shall receive all necessaries and the pension. Do you accept ? ”

Barbara Paulovna lifted an embroidered handkerchief to her face.

“ I have already told you,” said she, nervously twisting her lips, “ that I will agree to anything, whatever it may please you to do with me : for this decision it but remains for me to ask you, “ Will you allow me at least to thank you for your magnanimity ? ”

“ Without any thanks, I beseech you ; it will be better so,” hastily replied Lavretski ; and approaching the door he added, “ Thus, I am able to count upon—— ”

“ To-morrow I shall be at Lavreek,” said Barbara Paulovna, respectfully rising from the chair ; “ but Theodore Ivanitch—— ” (she called him “ Téodore ” no more).

“ What is your pleasure ? ”

“ I know that I have not yet done anything to deserve forgiveness : can I hope that at least in time—— ”

“ Barbara Paulovna, you are an intelligent woman, and even I am not a fool. I know

that forgiveness is one of the last things that can trouble you: I forgave you long ago; but between us there was always an abyss."

"I shall know how to submit," replied she, and bowed her head. "I have not forgotten my own crime—I should not be astonished if I learnt that the news of my death gladdened you," she humbly added, indicating lightly with her hand the gazette lying on the table, which Lavretski had forgotten. Theodore Ivanitch shuddered; the paragraph was marked out with a pencil. Barbara Paulovna, still with great humility, watched him, and she looked very beautiful at that moment. The grey Parisian dress fitted her slender, almost girlish figure, perfectly. Her thin delicate neck in its white collar, her bosom rising and falling regularly, her hands without rings or bracelets—the whole of her figure, from her lustrous hair to the ends of her hardly visible shoes, was so elegant. Lavretski cast at her a savage glance, all but cried "Brava," all but struck her with his fist—and quitted the room.

An hour later he had already set out for Vassilievski ; and two hours later Barbara Paulovna gave an order to engage the best carriage in the town, put on a plain straw hat with a black veil, a simple mantle, confided Ada to the care of Justine, and set out to call on Mrs. Kaleetina. From questions which she had put to the servants she learnt that her husband visited at the house every day.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE day of the arrival of Lavretski's wife in the town of O—— was a joyless day for him ; and it was also a painful day for Leeza. She had not yet been downstairs to wish her mother good morning, when already under the window rang out the sounds of a horse's hoofs, and with secret fear she saw Panshin ride into the courtyard. " He has come so early for a final answer," thought she—and she was not deceived : after turning about in the drawing-room, he suggested to her that she should come with him into the garden, and there he demanded the decision of his fate. Leeza collected herself with spirit, and told him that she could not be his wife. He listened to her until the end, standing at her side, his hat pulled down on to his forehead. Politely, but in a changed voice, he asked her, was that her last word, and had he given some cause

for such an alteration in her feelings? then pressed one hand over his eyes, gave a short broken sigh, and let his hand fall from his face.

“I did not want to go by the beaten road,” said he darkly, “I wanted to find a friend in accordance with the inclination of my heart, but evidently that is not possible. Good-bye, Fair Dream.” He bowed deeply to Leeza and returned into the house.

Leeza hoped that he would ride away at once, but he went to Marie Dmitrievna’s boudoir, and was seated there for about an hour.

When going away he said to Leeza, “Your mother asks for you ; adieu for ever !” then mounted his horse, and from the very gateway galloped away as fast as the horse could go.

Leeza entered her mother’s room and found her in tears ; Panshin had told her of his unhappiness.

“Wherefore hast thou killed me ? wherefore hast thou killed me ?” thus the mortified

widow began her complaint. "Whom dost thou want? in what is he not the husband for thee! A gentleman of the bedchamber uninteresting! He can in Petersburg marry which maid-of-honour he fancies, and I—I was hoping! And is it long since thou hast changed towards him? Whence this swollen cloud? it did not bring itself: was it that blockhead? truly thou hast found a counsellor." "Ah, my darling," continued Marie Dmitrievna, "how respectful he was, how attentive in his very grief! He promised not to forsake me, but I shall not outlive this! Oh, my head! the mortal suffering has begun. Send Palasha to me; thou wilt kill me if thou dost not change thy mind, hearest thou?" And having twice called Leeza ungrateful, Marie Dmitrievna sent her away.

Leeza went to her own room, but she had not yet been able to recover herself after the explanations with Panshin and with her mother, when again a storm burst over her, and from the side from which she least of all expected it. Martha Timofaievna entered the room and at once shut the door behind

her with a bang. The face of the old lady was pale, her cap was awry, her eyes glistened, her hands and lips trembled.

"Excellent, Madam!" began Martha Timofaievna, in a trembling and broken whisper. "Excellent! From whom didst thou but learn this, mother mine? . . . Give me some water; I cannot speak."

"Calm yourself, dear aunt: what is the matter with you?" said Leeza, giving her a glass of water; "you yourself, it seems, did not pity Gospodin Panshin."

Martha Timofaievna put down the glass.

"I cannot drink—I shall knock my last tooth out. What has this to do with Panshin? how does it concern Panshin? Thou wilt do better to tell me who taught thee to arrange meetings at night. Tell me, mother mine!"

Leeza paled.

"And it please thee, do not think to excuse thyself," continued Martha Timofaievna. "Shoorotchka herself saw it all, and told me; she does not lie, and I have forbidden her to chatter."

"I do not excuse myself, dear aunt," muttered Leeza, almost inaudibly.

"Ah, so that is it, mother mine? thou didst appoint a meeting with him, with this old tempter, with this meek being."

"No."

"How so?"

"I went down into the drawing-room for a book; he was in the garden—and called to me."

"And thou didst go? Excellent! And thou lovest him? Is that it?"

"I love him," replied Leeza in a quiet voice.

"Dear mother mine! She loves him!" Martha Timofaievna tore her cap off her head. "She loves a married man! but loves!"

"He told me——" began Leeza.

"What did such a hawk tell thee, what?"

"He told me that his wife was dead."

Martha Timofaievna crossed herself.

"The Heavenly Kingdom be hers," whispered she; "a silly, empty woman—let me not speak of that. So that is it? he is

thus a widower, and he is, I see, at work with both hands; he has been the death of one wife, and now for another. What a silent one! But this I will say to thee, niece: in our time, when I was young, girls would have suffered painfully for such ruses. Do not be angry with me, mother mine; the truth makes none but a fool angry. I have to-day even given the order that I am not at home to him. I love him, but for this I will never forgive him. Bah! the widowed one! Give me, please, some water. . . . That thou didst pack off Panshin, I think thee a brave girl; but do not sit at night with this goatish kind, with men; and do not grieve me, an old woman, or it may be I am not all caresses—I can bite. . . . A widowed one!”

Martha Timofaievna quitted the room, and Leeza seated herself in a corner and wept. Bitter thoughts rose up in her mind; she had not deserved to be so humbled. Love had not presented itself to her with gaiety; for the second time since yesterday evening she was weeping. The new, unexpected

feeling had hardly begun its existence in her heart, yet already how dearly she had paid for it, how roughly strange hands had searched her sacred secret; bitterly, painfully, ashamedly she felt it. But there was neither doubt nor fear within her, and Lavretski had become still dearer to her.

She hesitated until she understood herself, but after that meeting, after that kiss, she could hesitate no longer, she knew that she loved, and loved sincerely, not lightly, that she had bound herself immovably for all her life, and she feared no threats, she felt that violence could never break this bond.

CHAPTER XXXIX

MARIE DMITRIEVNA was much alarmed when she was informed of the arrival of Barbara Paulovna Lavretska ; she did not even know whether or not to receive her ; she feared to offend Theodore Ivanitch. Finally curiosity overcame her. "Why not?" she reflected: "is not she also a relation?" and, seating herself in an arm-chair, said to the lackey, "Yes."

A few moments passed, the door was opened, and Barbara Paulovna quickly, with scarcely audible footfalls, approached Marie Dmitrievna, and, without giving her time to rise from her chair, bowed before her almost to her knees.

"I thank you, dear aunt," began she, speaking Russian in a low, agitated voice. "Thank you ; I did not hope for such condescension on your part ; you are kind—as an angel."

Saying these words, Barbara Paulovna unexpectedly took possession of one of Marie Dmitrievna's hands, lightly pressed it between her pale lilac gloves, and servilely raised it to her full, rosy lips. Marie Dmitrievna quite lost possession of herself, in seeing such a beautiful and charmingly dressed woman almost at her feet ; she did not know how to behave ; she wished to withdraw her hand, to ask her to be seated, to say something tender ; and she finished by rising and kissing the smooth and perfumed forehead of Barbara Paulovna. Under that kiss even Barbara Paulovna was for a moment stupefied.

"How do you do ? *bon jour* !" said Marie Dmitrievna. "I certainly never imagined—still, I certainly am glad to see you. You understand, my dear—it is not for me to be the judge between husband and wife. . . ."

"My husband was in the right," broke in Barbara Paulovna ; "I alone am to blame."

"That is a very commendable feeling," replied Marie Dmitrievna—"very. Is it

long since you arrived? Have you seen him? Yes, please be seated."

"I arrived yesterday," replied Barbara Paulovna, humbly seating herself. "I have seen Theodore Ivanitch and have spoken with him."

"Ah! Well, what did he say?"

"I feared that my sudden arrival would stir his anger," continued Barbara Paulovna; "but he did not rob me of his presence."

"That is, he did not . . . yes—yes, I understand," murmured Marie Dmitrievna; "he is only in appearance a little harsh, his heart is soft."

"Theodore Ivanitch has not pardoned me; he did not wish to hear me. But he has been so generous, he has decided that Lavreek shall be my residence."

"A beautiful estate."

"To-morrow I set out thither, in fulfilment of his wish; but I counted it as a duty to call upon you before doing so."

"Thank you very, very much, my dear; one must never forget one's relations. Do

you know, I am astonished that you speak Russian so well ; *c'est étonnant.*"

Barbara Paulovna sighed.

"I remained abroad too long, Marie Dmitrievna, that I know ; but my heart was always Russian, and I did not forget my Fatherland."

"Just so, that is best of all. Theodore Ivanitch, nevertheless, did not at all expect you. . . . Yes ; trust my experience, *la patrie avant tout.* Oh, please do show me, what is that charming mantle you are wearing ?"

"It pleases you ?" Barbara Paulovna quickly removed it from her shoulders. "It is very plain—from Madame Baudran."

"That is at once evident, from Madame Baudran. How nice, and what taste ! I am sure you have brought many enchanting things with you. I would like if only to look at them."

"The whole of my wardrobe is at your service, kindest of aunts. If you will allow me, I can show something to your maid. I have with me a maid from Paris, a wonderful seamstress."

"You are very kind, my dear ; but truly my conscience pricks me."

"Conscience," repeated Barbara Paulovna reproachfully. "If you would make me happy, dispose of me as of your own property."

Marie Dmitrievna was quite softened.

"You are charming," said she. "And why do you not take off your hat and gloves?"

"Why, you permit me?" asked Barbara Paulovna ; and, as if overcome by her feelings, she clasped her hands lightly.

"Do not ask such a question ; I hope you will dine with us. I . . . you will make the acquaintance of my daughter" —(Marie Dmitrievna was slightly disconcerted : "what have I done?" thought she), and added, "She is not quite well to-day."

"Oh, my aunt, how kind you are!" cried Barbara Paulovna, and put her handkerchief to her eyes.

The footman announced the arrival of Gideonovski. The old gossip entered smiling and bowing profoundly, and Marie

Dmitrievna presented him to her visitor. He was at first embarrassed, but Barbara Paulovna treated him so coquettishly and respectfully that his ears were soon burning, and fictions, rumours and pleasantries flowed in honeyed words from his mouth. Barbara Paulovna listened to him, smiling with restraint, and by degrees herself began to talk. She modestly talked about Paris, about her travels, about Baden; she made Marie Dmitrievna laugh twice, and each time she sighed lightly as if she were mentally reproaching herself for misplaced mirth. She asked permission to bring Ada; and having taken off her gloves, with her smooth hands (always washed with marsh-mallow soap), she showed how and where they wore flounces, ruchings, lace and embroidery. She promised to bring a flask of the new English perfume "Victoria Essence," and rejoiced like a child when Marie Dmitrievna signified her willingness to accept it as a present. She shed a tear over the memory of the feeling she experienced when she again heard for the first time Russian bells; "so

deeply did the music cut into my very heart," she murmured.

At that moment Leeza entered.

Since the morning, from the very moment when, growing cold with horror, she had read Lavretski's note, Leeza had been preparing herself for the meeting with his wife ; she felt that she would see her. She decided not to avoid her, as a punishment for, as she called them, her sinful hopes. The abrupt change in her destiny had shaken her to the uttermost ; in some two hours her face grew thin, but she had shed no tears. " According to my desert," she said to herself, with pain and difficulty stifling in her soul some kind of bitter and resentful rage. " I must go in," thought she, as soon as she was informed of Mrs. Lavretska's visit, and she entered the drawing-room—she stood a long time by the door before she could compel herself to open it.

With the thought " In her presence I am guilty," she crossed the threshold, and compelled herself to look at her, compelled herself to smile at her.

Barbara Paulovna, as soon as she saw Leeza, rose and went towards her, bowed to her slightly, but none the less respectfully. "Allow me to recommend myself," said she in an ingratiating voice: "your mother has behaved so condescendingly towards me, that I hope you also will be . . . kind."

The expression on the face of Barbara Paulovna when she uttered this last word, the cunning smile, the cold and at the same time gentle glance, the movement of her hands and shoulders, of her very clothes, and the whole of her being, stirred up such a feeling of repulsion in Leeza that she was unable to make any reply, and only with an effort held out her hand.

"This young lady disdains me," thought Barbara Paulovna, pressing impulsively the cold fingers of Leeza; and turning to Marie Dmitrievna said in a low voice, "*mais elle est délicateuse.*"

Leeza blushed slightly; a jeer and a taunt were detected by her in this exclamation, but she decided not to believe her own impressions, and seated herself near the window

with her embroidery. Barbara Paulovna did not leave her in peace even there; she approached her and began to praise her taste and artistic knowledge . . . whilst the heart of Leeza beat so strongly, so painfully, that she was scarcely able to contain herself, was scarcely able to remain seated. It seemed to her that Barbara Paulovna knew all, and triumphing secretly, mocked at her. Happily for her, Gideonovski began to talk with Barbara Paulovna and attracted her attention. Leeza bent over her embroidery and unperceived watched her. "*He* loved this woman," thought she; but at once drove the thought of Lavretski from her mind. She feared to lose control over herself, as her head was swimming gently, when Marie Dmitrievna began to speak of music.

"I have heard, my dear," she began, "that you are a marvellous virtuosa."

"I have not played for a long time," replied Barbara Paulovna, quickly seating herself at the piano and running her fingers energetically over the keys. "What do you command me to play?"

“ Make us your debtors as you please.”

Barbara Paulovna, who had great strength and dexterity, played, with the hand of a master, a brilliant and difficult study of Herz.

“ A spirit of the air !” cried Gideonovski.

“ Extraordinary,” confirmed Marie Dmitrievna.

“ Barbara Paulovna, I acknowledge it,” murmured Marie Dmitrievna, calling her for the first time by her Christian name, “ you have surprised me. If you would but give a recital ! We have a musician here, an old man, a German, an eccentric, very learned ; he gives lessons to Leeza ; he would simply go out of his wits over you.”

“ Elizabeth Mikaelovna is also a musician ?” asked Barbara Paulovna, slightly turning her head towards her.

“ Yes, she does not play badly, and loves music ; but what does that mean when you are present ! There is another young person here, with whom you must become acquainted ; he is an artist to the soul and

composes very nicely ; he alone will be able to appreciate you fully."

"A young person," said Barbara Paulovna. "Who is he? Some poor fellow?"

"Poor! our principal cavalier, and not only ours but Petersburg's; a gentleman of the bedchamber received in the best society. You have surely heard of him—Panshin, Vladimir Nikolaievitch; he is here on Government business; a future Minister, if you please."

"And an artist?"

"An artist in his soul, and so amiable. You will see him; he has been a constant visitor here; I invited him for this evening, and I *hope* he will come," added Marie Dmitrievna, with a small sigh and a bitter, twisted smile.

Leeza understood the meaning of that smile, but it was no time for her to think of that.

"And young?" repeated Barbara Paulovna, modulating her voice slightly from tone to tone.

"Twenty-eight years old, with a most

prepossessing exterior; an accomplished young man," replied Marie Dmitrievna.

"One may say an exemplary young man," remarked Gideonovski.

Barbara Paulovna began suddenly to play a noisy waltz of Strauss's, beginning with a trill so forcible and rapid that Gideonovski even shuddered; but in the middle of the waltz she abruptly changed into a sad motif, and finished up with the *aria* from *Lucia*: "*Fra poco . . .*" She considered that gay music was unsuited to her position. The *aria* from *Lucia de Lammermoor*, with the emphasis on the sentimental passages, affected Marie Dmitrievna very much.

"What soul!" said she in a low voice to Gideonovski.

"A spirit of the air," repeated Gideonovski, and raised his eyes towards the ceiling.

The dinner-hour came. Martha Timofaievna came down from her room when the soup was already upon the table. She treated Barbara Paulovna very coldly, answered her pleasant remarks with half-words, and did not look at her. Barbara Paulovna herself

soon understood that she would draw nothing from this old lady ; and Marie Dmitrievna became still kinder to her visitor, as the rudeness of her aunt angered her. It was not only at Barbara Paulovna that the old lady would not look—she would not look at Leeza also ; and although her eyes shone so brightly, she sat like a stone, yellow, pale, with compressed lips, and ate nothing.

Leeza seemed to be calm, and her mind had really become more tranquil ; a strange numbness, the numbness of the condemned, had overtaken her. During dinner Barbara Paulovna said little ; she had again become as it were timid, and over her face had spread her own peculiar expression of modest melancholy. Gideonovski alone enlivened the conversation with his anecdotes, although (and that was the hindrance) he furtively watched Martha Timofaievna and felt a desire to cough—the desire to cough fell upon him every time when he was preparing to lie in her presence. But she did not interfere, did not interrupt him. After dinner it was discovered that Barbara Paulovna was a

great lover of Preference, and this pleased Marie Dmitrievna to such an extent, that she was even affected and thought to herself, "How extraordinary! what a fool Theodore Ivanitch must be, to be unable to understand such a woman!" She seated herself to play cards with her and Gideonovski; but Martha Timofaievna carried off Leeza to her own room upstairs, saying that it must be by the expression on Leeza's face that her head was aching.

"Yes, her head aches terribly," said Marie Dmitrievna, turning to Barbara Paulovna and nodding her head; "just such a migraine happens to me."

"Is it possible?" replied Barbara Paulovna.

Leeza entered her aunt's room, and helplessly let herself sink on to a chair. For long Martha Timofaievna looked at her in silence, then quietly knelt before her, and began, still silently, to kiss her hands by turn. Leeza leaned forward, blushed and wept, but did not raise up Martha Timofaievna, did not withdraw her hands; she felt that she had

not the right to withdraw them, that she had not the right to prevent the old lady from expressing her penitence, from asking her forgiveness, for the part she had taken yesterday. And Martha Timofaievna could scarcely cease to kiss those poor white, powerless hands, and silent tears streamed from her eyes and from the eyes of Leeza.

In the wide arm-chair, beside a heap of stockings, the cat Sailor lay purring, the slender flame of the little lamp moved and flickered slightly before the Ikon ; and in the next room, behind the door, Nastasia Karpovna stood, and with her cotton handkerchief twisted into a ball, stealthily wiped her eyes.

CHAPTER XL

AT the same time, downstairs they were playing Preference. Marie Dmitrievna was winning and was in high spirits, when the footman announced the arrival of Panshin.

Marie Dmitrievna dropped the cards and began to struggle in her chair; Barbara Paulovna looked at her with amusement, then turned her glance to the door, where Panshin appeared dressed in a buttoned black frock-coat with a high English collar.

"It was painful to me to submit, but you see I am come"—that is what was expressed on his smileless, freshly shaven face.

"What is it, Vladimir!" cried Marie Dmitrievna; "formerly you entered without being announced!"

Panshin only replied to Marie Dmitrievna

with a glance, and bowed politely, but did not kiss her hand. She presented him to Barbara Paulovna; he stepped backward a pace and bowed to her with the same politeness, but with an added shade of elegance and esteem, then seated himself at the card table.

The game was soon finished. Panshin informed himself about the health of Elizabeth Mikaelovna, and having learned that she was not quite well, expressed his grief. Then he began to converse with Barbara Paulovna, weighing and forming every word like a diplomat, and respectfully listening to her answers to the end. But the importance of his diplomatic tone was lost on Barbara Paulovna, did not communicate itself to her. On the contrary, she looked into his face with merry attention, talked without embarrassment, and her thin nostrils trembled slightly as if from suppressed laughter.

Marie Dmitrievna began to extol the talent of Barbara Paulovna. Panshin politely bowed his head as much as his collar would permit him, and remarked that he was early

aware of that, and let off a speech which all but included Metternich himself.

The velvety eyes of Barbara Paulovna blinked, and having said in a low voice, "And I see you also are an artist, a comrade?" added in a still lower tone, "Come," nodding with her head towards the piano. That single dropped word "*come*" changed the whole exterior of Panshin. In an instant, as if by magic, his care-laden appearance vanished; he smiled, became animated, unbuttoned his coat, and saying, "What an artist am I—ugh!—but you, I have heard, are a real artist," followed Barbara Paulovna to the piano.

"Make him sing the song 'As the Moon floats,'" cried Marie Dmitrievna.

"You sing?" asked Barbara Paulovna, enlightening him with a bright and rapid glance; "seat yourself."

Panshin began to excuse himself.

"Seat yourself," she repeated, tapping the back of the chair imperatively.

He sat down, coughed, strained his collar, and sang his romance.

"Charming," said Barbara Paulovna. "You sing beautifully; you have style. Repeat it."

She walked to the other side of the piano and stood opposite to Panshin. He repeated his song, adding a melodramatic shake to his voice. Barbara Paulovna gazed at him attentively, leaning with her elbows on the piano, her white hands held at the level of her lips. Panshin finished.

"Charming, charming idea," said she, with the quiet assurance of one who knows. "Tell me, have you written something for a woman's voice, for a mezzo-soprano?"

"I write almost nothing," replied Panshin; "I only do it between affairs. But do you sing?"

"I sing."

"Oh, do sing something to us," said Marie Dmitrievna.

Barbara Paulovna pushed back her hair from her reddening cheeks and shook her head.

"Our voices ought to go one with the other," said she, turning to Panshin: "we

will sing a duet. Do you know '*Son geloso*' or '*La ci darem,*' or '*Mira la bianca luna*'?"

"I used to sing '*Mira la bianca luna,*'" replied Panshin, "and have long since forgotten it."

"Never mind, we will try it over in a low voice. Allow me to come."

Barbara Paulovna sat down at the piano, Panshin stood beside her; they sang the duet in low voices, during which Barbara Paulovna corrected him several times; afterwards they sang aloud, and repeated it twice: "*Mira la bianca Lu—u—na.*"

Barbara Paulovna's voice had lost its freshness, but she controlled it very cleverly. Panshin was at first timid and slightly false; then he entered into it with fire, and if he did not sing irreproachably, moved his shoulders, swayed his whole body and lifted up his hand from time to time like a professional singer.

Barbara Paulovna played two or three little pieces of Thalberg's music, and coquetishly recited with music a small French

piece. Marie Dmitrievna hardly knew how to express her delight ; she wanted several times to send for Leeza ; Gideonovski was also unable to find words to express his feelings, and only nodded his head, but suddenly, unexpectedly yawned, and hardly succeeded in covering his mouth with his hand. That yawn did not escape Barbara Paulovna ; she abruptly turned her back on the piano and said, "Enough of such music—let us chatter," and crossed her arms. "Yes, enough music," repeated Panshin gaily, and began a conversation with her, light and lively, speaking French. "Exactly as in the best Paris salons," thought Marie Dmitrievna, listening to their supple and spirited phrases.

Panshin felt nothing but delight : his eyes shone and he smiled. At first, when he happened to encounter the looks of Marie Dmitrievna, he passed his hand over his face, contracted his brows and sighed haltingly ; later he quite forgot her, and gave himself up entirely to the enjoyment of the half-art, half-society chatter.

Barbara Paulovna showed herself to be

a great philosopher : she had a ready answer to anything ; she had no doubts, and did not hesitate, whatever the subject might be. It was obvious that she had conversed much and often, with intelligent people of various persuasions. All her thoughts and feelings turned about Paris.

Panshin led a discussion of literature ; it appeared that she also, as well as he, read none but French books. George Sand roused her indignation ; Balzac she esteemed, although he wearied her ; Sue and Scribe appeared to her as great heart-searchers ; she adored Dumas fils and Féval. In her soul she preferred Paul de Kock to any of these ; but, as may be imagined, she did not even mention his name : properly speaking, literature did not occupy her very much. Barbara Paulovna very adroitly avoided all mention of anything which might even dimly bring to mind her position, and in her conversation no mention was made of love ; on the contrary, it rather suggested humility, disillusionment, and severity towards the

allurement of passion. Panshin objected; she did not agree with him . . . but, strange fact! in the same moment that words of condemnation issued from her mouth, often austere words, the sound of those words was caressing and tender, and her eyes were saying . . . it was difficult to tell what exactly those charming eyes were saying; but the message was not stern, not clear, yet sweet it was. Panshin strove to understand their secret meaning; himself strove to speak with his eyes, but he felt himself that nothing came of the attempt. He admitted to himself that Barbara Paulovna, in the character of a real, foreign lioness, was of more importance than he, and therefore he was not quite master of himself. Barbara Paulovna had a habit of just touching the sleeve of the one with whom she conversed, and those moments of contact excited Panshin very much. She also possessed the gift of quickly becoming intimate with every one, and two hours had not passed when it already seemed to Panshin that he had known her all his

life, and Leeza, that same Leeza whom he still loved, to whom he had offered his hand but yesterday, vanished as if in a mist.

Tea was served, and the conversation became still less formal; Marie Dmitrievna rang for the footman, and told him to ask Leeza to come down to the drawing-room if her head had become less painful. Panshin, hearing the name of Leeza, began to talk about self-sacrifice, as to which were more capable of self-sacrifice—men or women. Marie Dmitrievna at once became agitated, and began to affirm that women were more capable, remarked that she would prove it in a few words, became entangled, and finished with a rather unsuccessful illustration.

Barbara Paulovna took a sheet of music, half-concealed herself behind it, and eating a biscuit the while, bent herself towards Panshin, and with a calm smile upon her lips and in her glance, said in a low voice, "The good lady did not invent gunpowder." Panshin was somewhat startled

and astonished at the audacity of Barbara Paulovna. But he did not understand how much contempt for himself was hidden in this unexpected opening of the heart; and forgetting the kindness and devotion of Marie Dmitrievna, forgetting the dinners with which she had nourished him, the money with which she had obliged him, he replied with that same kind of smile, with the same tone of voice (unfortunate being) "*Je crois bien*"—and even not "*Je crois bien*," but "*J'crois ben.*"

Barbara Paulovna threw him a friendly glance and stood up. Leeza had entered.

Martha Timofaievna had tried in vain to keep her; Leeza had decided to endure the trial till the end.

Barbara Paulovna and Panshin went together to meet her, and on the face of Panshin the former diplomatic expression had reappeared.

"How are you?" he asked Leeza.

"I am better now, thank you very much," she replied.

"And we have occupied ourselves with

a little music here. It is a pity that you did not hear Barbara Paulovna ; she sings delightfully."

"Come here, my dear," sounded the voice of Marie Dmitrievna.

Barbara Paulovna at once, with the obedience of a child, approached Marie Dmitrievna, and seated herself on a small stool at her feet. Marie Dmitrievna had called her, in order to leave Panshin alone with Leeza if only for a minute ; she still secretly hoped that Leeza might regain her senses ; and, besides, a thought had come into her head, which she must at once tell.

"Do you know," whispered she to Barbara Paulovna, "I want to try to reconcile you with your husband. I do not answer for the success of it, but I will try : you know he esteems me deeply."

Barbara Paulovna slowly raised her eyes to Marie Dmitrievna, and put her hands together beautifully.

"You would be my saviour, my aunt," said she in a sad voice. "I do not know how to thank you for all your kindness ; but

I am too guilty in the sight of Theodore Ivanitch—he is unable to pardon me.”

“Is it possible? You? . . . really? . . .” Marie Dmitrievna began to say with curiosity. . . .

“Do not ask me,” interrupted Barbara Paulovna. “I was young, light-headed . . . although I do not want to justify my conduct.”

“But still, why should we not try? Do not despair,” replied Marie Dmitrievna, and wished to touch lightly the cheek of Barbara Paulovna, but glanced at her face and lost courage. “Modest, modest, yet already a remarkable person,” thought she.

Whilst this was happening Panshin was saying to Leeza, “You are unwell.”

“Yes, I am not well.”

“I understand you,” said he after a somewhat long silence. “Yes, I understand you.”

“How?”

“I understand you,” significantly repeated Panshin, who simply did not know what to say.

Leeza was confused, but afterwards thought, "Let it be so!" Panshin assumed a mysterious expression, and in silence looked sternly aside.

"Is that already eleven o'clock striking?" remarked Marie Dmitrievna.

The guests understood, and began to take their leave. Barbara Paulovna was bound to promise that she would come to dine the following day and bring Ada.

Gideonovski, who had all but fallen asleep sitting in the corner, offered himself as her escort to the house.

Panshin solemnly bid good-bye to all ; and, at the door, when seating Barbara Paulovna in the carriage, pressed her hand, and cried as she drove away "*Au revoir.*"

Gideonovski had seated himself at her side, and she amused herself all the way by putting the toe of her boot, as if by accident, on to his foot. He was confused, paid her compliments ; she laughed, and, when the light from the lamps in the street fell into the carriage, made eyes at him. The waltz she had herself played rang in

her head and excited her; wherever she might be, it was only necessary to her to figure to herself a ballroom, lights, a whirl to the sounds of music, and her soul burst into flame, her eyes receded strangely, a smile wandered to and fro on her lips, and something graceful, Mænad-like, spread itself over every part of her body.

Having arrived at the house she sprang lightly from the carriage—only lionesses know how to spring so—turned to Gideonovski, and burst out laughing in his face.

“An amiable being,” thought the privy councillor, directing himself towards his rooms, where the valet was waiting for him with a bottle of opodeldoc. “It is well that I am a serious man . . . but at what was she laughing?”

.

The whole of that night Martha Timofaievna was seated at the bedside of Leeza.

CHAPTER XLI

L AVRETSKI passed one and a half days at Vassilievski, and almost the whole time wandered about the surrounding country. He was unable to remain long in one place ; anguish gnawed him ; he passed through all the torments of incessant and impetuous yet powerless transports. He remembered the feeling which had penetrated his soul the day following his arrival in the country ; he remembered the intentions he had then, and felt a great contempt for himself. What had been able to tear him away from that which he acknowledged to be his duty, and the sole problem of his future? The hunger for happiness . . . and now again the hunger for happiness—"evidently Mikaelaivitch was right," thought he. "Thou didst want for the second time to plumb the depth of earthly happiness," said he to himself. "Thou hadst forgotten that

it is even a profusion, an unearned mercy, when it visits a human being although but once. Thou wilt say it was not complete, it was false ; but produce thy right to complete, real happiness. Glance around : who about thee is happy ? who is enjoying himself ? Yon peasant going out to mow, it may be that he is content with his lot ! What ! wouldst thou wish to change places with him ? Remember thine own mother, how insignificantly small were her wants, and what fell to her share ! Evidently thou didst boast before Panshin when thou didst tell him thou wast come to Russia in order to plough the land ; thou camest to court young girls in thine old age. News of thy freedom reached thee, and thou didst throw down everything, didst forget everything, and didst run as a boy after a butterfly. . . .” The image of Leeza constantly presented itself to him in the midst of his meditations ; with an effort he drove it out, as also the other unbidden image, the other calmly cunning, beautiful, and hated features.

The old man, Anton, had noticed that the

master was not himself, and having sighed several times behind the door and a few times on the threshold, decided to go to him and to advise him to drink something warm.

Lavretski shouted at him, and ordered him to go away, and afterwards excused himself to the old man, and this saddened Anton still more.

Lavretski was unable to sit in the drawing-room ; he fancied that his great-grandfather Andrew looked contemptuously from the canvas at his feeble descendant ; it seemed to him that he was saying with the corner of his twisted lips, "Thou! thou art on thin ice." "Can it be," he thought, "that I shall not unravel my life, that I shall be subjected by this absurdity?" (In war the seriously wounded soldier always calls his wound "absurdity"; unless man deceive himself he is unable to live on earth.) "Am I in truth a boy, or what? I have seen it close, I have almost held in my hands the possibility of happiness for a whole life, and suddenly it vanished; and so it is in a lottery—turn the wheel still a trifle, and the

poor man perhaps would become rich. It does not happen, it does not happen thus, so that is finished. I will take up my burden, having set my teeth and commanded silence, seeing that it is not the first time I have taken myself by the hand; and wherefore did I run, and why am I sitting here, like an ostrich, burying my head in a bush? Is it so terrible to look into the eyes of Misfortune?—absurdity!” “Anton,” he shouted loudly, “order the carriage at once.” “Yes,” thought he again, “it is necessary to command oneself to be silent, to keep a high hand over oneself.”

With such resolutions Lavretski strove to help his grief, but it was great and severe; and Aprakseya herself, who had not so much outlived her intelligence as her every feeling, shook her head, and followed him sadly with her eyes when he seated himself in the carriage to ride into the town.

The horses galloped away, and he sat motionless and upright, and without movement he gazed before him along the road.

CHAPTER XLII

ON the previous evening Leeza had written to Lavretski to ask him to come to them this evening, but he went first to his own rooms.

He found neither his wife nor his daughter in the house, and from the servants he learnt that they had gone to visit Mrs. Kaleetina. This news astonished him, and made him furious. "Evidently Barbara Paulovna has decided to give me no chance to live," he thought, with a wild stir of animosity. He began to walk to and fro, constantly brushing with his feet and hands the child's toys and lady's belongings which were lying about in his way. He called Justine, and ordered her to clear away all this "rubbish." "Yes, sir," she said, with a grimace, and began to put the room in order, bending gracefully, and with her every movement giving Lavretski to understand that she considered him

to be an uncombed bear. He looked with dislike at her misused, but still piquant, mocking, Parisian face, at her white sleeves, silk apron, and light cap; at last he sent her away, and after much hesitation (Barbara Paulovna having still not returned) decided to go to Mrs. Kaleetina's house; not to Marie Dmitrievna (he would not for anything enter her drawing-room, that drawing-room where his wife was), but to Martha Timofaievna; he remembered that the back staircase from the servants' entrance led straight to her rooms, and he went thus. Chance helped him; he met Shoorotchka at the door, and she conducted him to Martha Timofaievna. He found her, contrary to her custom, alone; she was sitting in a corner, without a cap, bending forward, with her arms laid across her bosom.

The old lady was very agitated when she saw Lavretski, rose hastily, and began to go here and there as if she were seeking her cap.

"And here thou art—here," she began to say, avoiding his look, and becoming more

agitated. "Well, how are you? well, what is it? what is to be done? where wast thou yesterday? She has arrived. Thus it is already necessary . . . somehow."

Lavretski dropped into a chair.

"Well, seat thyself, seat thyself," continued the old lady; "thou camest straight upstairs; yes, it is to be understood. What is it? Thou hast come to look at me? Thank thee."

The old lady was silent. Lavretski did not know what to say to her, but she understood him.

"Leeza . . . yes, Leeza was here just now," continued Martha Timofaievna, twisting and untwisting the strings of her work-bag; "she is not quite well. Shoorotchka, where art thou? Come here, little woman: what is it? Thou canst not sit still? And my head is aching; it must be from the singing and the music."

"From what singing, auntie?"

"And what! here already these—they—how do you call them?—sang duets, and all in Italian, *tchee-tchee* and *tcha-tcha*, real

magpies ; they begin to utter notes just as if they were dragging them out of their souls. This Panshin and thine ; and how quickly it has been arranged, already quite as relations, without any formality ; but one ought to say even a dog seeks a haven. People seek their own advantage in order to exist."

"None the less I must say I did not expect this," replied Lavretski ; "great boldness was necessary here."

"No, my dear, this is not boldness, it is calculation, and God be with her ! They say you are sending her to Lavreek : is it true ?"

"Yes ; I have offered it to Barbara Paulovna."

"Did she ask for money ?"

"Not yet."

"That will not be long put off ; and now that I look at thee, art thou well ?"

"I am well."

"Shoorotchka," suddenly called Martha Timofaievna, "go, please, and tell Elizabeth Mikaelovna . . . that is ; no, ask her . . . she is downstairs ?"

"Downstairs, ma'am."

"Well, yes; ask her where she put my book; she knows."

"Yes, ma'am."

The old lady again became agitated, and began to pull out the drawers of her writing-table. Lavretski sat motionless on his chair.

Suddenly light steps were heard on the stairs, and Leeza came into the room.

Lavretski stood up and bowed; Leeza stopped near the door.

"Leeza, Leezotchka," said Martha Timofaievna fussily, "where is my book? where didst thou put it?"

"What book, dear aunt?"

"Yes, the book. My God, but I did not call thee; yet it is the same. What are you doing downstairs? Here is Theodore Ivanitch. How is thy head?"

"It is nothing."

"Thou dost always say it is nothing. What are they doing downstairs? Music again?"

"No, they are playing cards."

"Yes, she has a hand for anything. Shoorotchka, I see thou wishest to run in the garden ; march."

"No, Martha Timofaievna——"

"Do not argue, please ; run away. Nastasia Karpovna has gone into the garden alone ; remain with her—respect the old lady." Shoorotchka quitted the room. "Yes, and where is my cap ? where has it put itself ?"

"Allow me to seek for it," murmured Leeza.

"Seat thyself, seat thyself ; my own legs have not given way yet ; it must be in my bedroom." And, throwing a glance at Lavretski from under her brows, Martha Timofaievna left them alone. She had left the door open, but she suddenly turned and closed it.

Leeza leaned back in her chair, and quietly put her hands to her face. Lavretski stood where he was.

"This is how we have been obliged to see one another," said he at last.

She took her hands from her face.

"Yes," she said in a low voice ; " we were soon punished."

" Punished ! " said Lavretski. " For what are you punished ? "

Leeza raised her eyes to him ; they expressed neither grief nor alarm, but they seemed smaller and dimmer. Her face was pale, and her slightly parted lips had also grown paler.

Lavretski's heart trembled with love and pity.

" You wrote to me : ' All is finished, ' " whispered he. " Yes, all is finished—before it had begun."

" It is necessary to forget all, " said Leeza. " I am glad that you came. I wanted to write to you, but this is better ; only we must hasten to take advantage of these moments. It remains to both of us to fulfil our duty. You, Theodore Ivanitch, must be reconciled to your wife."

" Leeza ! "

" I beseech it of you ; this alone is able to efface . . . all that has been. You will think . . . and you will not refuse me this."

"Leeza, for God's sake . . . you ask of me what is impossible. I am prepared to do all you order me to do; but *now* to be reconciled to her! . . . I will agree to anything. I have forgotten all; but I cannot compel my heart. Have mercy; that is harsh!"

"I do not demand of you . . . that of which you speak. Do not live with her if it is impossible; but make peace with her," replied Leeza, and again covered her eyes with her hand. "Remember your little daughter. Do this for me!"

"Yes," said Lavretski through his teeth, "I will do this. Let us suppose that in this I fulfil my duty. And you? In what does your duty consist?"

"Of that I know."

"Are you not already preparing to marry Panshin?"

A hardly noticeable smile touched Leeza's lips.

"Oh, no," she murmured.

"Leeza! Leeza!" cried Lavretski, "how happy we might have been!"

She glanced at him again.

"Now you see yourself, Theodore Ivanitch, that happiness depends, not on us, but on God."

"Yes, because you——"

The door of the next room was opened hastily, and Martha Timofaievna entered with her cap in her hand.

"I found it with difficulty," said she, standing between Leeza and Lavretski; "put it away myself. That is what old age means, bad luck; and, for that matter, youth is no better. Art thou going to Lavreek with thy wife?" she added, turning to Lavretski.

"With her to Lavreek? I? I do not know," he said, hesitating for a moment.

"Thou wilt go in downstairs?"

"To-day—no."

"Well, as thou feelest; but for thee, Leeza, I think it is necessary to go down. Ah, I forgot to give the bullfinch some food. Yes, wait a little; I will at once . . ." and Martha Timofaievna hurried out without putting on her cap.

Lavretski quickly approached Leeza.

"Leeza," he began in a supplicating voice, "we are parting for ever. My heart is bursting. Give me your hand to say good-bye."

"No," she said, and drew back the hand she had already stretched out. "No, Lavretski (it was the first time she had called him so), "I will not give you my hand: to what end? Go away, I beseech you. You know I love you. . . . Yes, I love you!" added she with an effort. "But no . . . no." And she raised her handkerchief to her lips.

"Give me at least that handkerchief."

The door grated. The handkerchief was falling to Leeza's feet, when Lavretski seized it before it could reach the floor, quickly thrust it into his breast pocket, and, turning, met the eyes of Martha Timofaievna.

"Leezotchka, it seems to me that thy mother is calling thee," murmured the old lady.

Leeza at once rose and went out.

Martha Timofaievna seated herself again in her corner, and Lavretski began to bid her good-bye.

“ Theo,” she said suddenly.

“ What, dear aunt ? ”

“ Thou art an honest man ? ”

“ How ? ”

“ I ask thee, art thou an honest man ? ”

“ I hope, yes.”

“ H’m : give me thy word of honour that thou art an honest man.”

“ So be it ; but for what reason ? ”

“ I know why ; yes, and thou, my foster-child, if thou but thinkest well—thou art not dull—wilt thyself understand for what reason I ask thee this. And now good-bye, dear man. Thank thee for visiting me ; and remember, Theo, thy given word, and kiss me. I know, dear heart, how heavy is thy load, and to all it is not light. For that I used to envy the flies ; there, thought I, are those for whom it is well to live on earth. And once in the night I heard how a fly was singing in the claws of a spider. No, I thought, they also have their terrors. What is to be done, Theo ? But none the less thou wilt remember thy word. Go.”

Lavretski went out at the back door, and

was already approaching the gates when a lackey overtook him.

“ Marie Dmitrievna gave the order to ask you to visit her,” he informed Lavretski.

“ Say, little brother, that I am unable to now . . . ” Theodore Ivanitch began to say.

“ They gave the order to ask very much,” continued the lackey. “ They gave the order to say that they are at home.”

“ Have the visitors gone, then ? ” asked Lavretski.

“ Exactly so, sir,” replied the lackey, and smiled.

Lavretski shrugged his shoulders and followed him.

CHAPTER XLIII

MARIE DMITRIEVNA was sitting alone in her boudoir, in a Voltaire arm-chair, smelling eau-de-Cologne, and a glass of orange-flower water stood near her on a little table. She was agitated, and as if frightened.

Lavretski entered.

"You wished to see me," said he, bowing stiffly.

"Yes," replied Marie Dmitrievna, and sipped a little water. "I learnt that you had gone directly to aunt, and I gave the order to ask you to come to me. I want to talk with you : be seated, please." Marie Dmitrievna drew a long breath. "You know," continued she, "your wife has come?"

"That is known to me," said Lavretski.

"Well, yes—that is, I wish to say she came to me and I received her ; and it is this I wish to explain to you, Theodore

Ivanitch. Thank God, I have deserved, I am able to say, the esteem of all, and will do nothing improper for anything in the world. Although I have foreseen that this will be disagreeable for you, I could not decide to refuse to receive her, Theodore Ivanitch; she is a relation through you. Enter into my position: what right had I to refuse her? You agree with me?"

"You disturb yourself unnecessarily, Marie Dmitrievna," replied Lavretski. "You have done quite right. I am not in the least angry. I have no intention whatever to deprive Barbara Paulovna of her friends. I did not come to you to-day because I do not wish to meet her—that is all."

"Ah, how pleasant it is to me to hear this from you, Theodore Ivanitch!" cried Marie Dmitrievna; "but I always expected this of your noble feelings. And that I am agitated, that is not astonishing: I am a woman and a mother. And your wife . . . Certainly, as I told her, I cannot judge between you and her; but she is such an amiable lady, that she is unable to give anything but pleasure."

Lavretski laughed and played with his hat.

“And this also I wished to say to you, Theodore Ivanitch,” continued Marie Dmitrievna, moving slightly towards him: “if you had but seen how modestly she behaved, how respectfully; really, it was even touching; and if you had but heard how she spoke of you! ‘I,’ she said, ‘am guilty before him in every way.’ ‘I,’ she said, ‘did not know how to appreciate him.’ An angel said this, not a human being. Truly she spoke thus—an angel. Her penitence is such . . . I have never seen such penitence!”

“But, Marie Dmitrievna,” said Lavretski, “permit me to be inquisitive. They say Barbara Paulovna sang to you: whilst she was so penitent, or how?”

“Ah, how is it you are not ashamed to speak thus? She only sang in order to give me pleasure, because I asked it of her with insistence, almost ordered her. I saw how painful her position was; so difficult. I thought ‘In what way can I relieve her?’ and I had heard how very talented she is. Be merciful, Theodore Ivanitch; she is quite

broken—ask even Gideonovski—a crushed woman, *tout-à-fait*. How can you?”

Lavretski only shrugged his shoulders.

“And besides, what a little angel you have in Ada! How charming, how pretty, and how intelligent! How she speaks French! and understands Russian, called me “Auntie”; and do you know, almost all children at her age are shy, but she has nothing of it. So like you, Theodore Ivanitch, it is startling; eyes, eyebrows—you, as you are. I do not love such little children much, I acknowledge it, but I am simply in love with your little daughter.”

“Marie Dmitrievna,” said Lavretski abruptly, “allow me to ask you, for what reason does it please you to say all this to me?”

“For what reason?”—Marie Dmitrievna again smelt the eau-de-Cologne and drank a little water—“for this reason, Theodore Ivanitch, I am speaking that . . . Am I not your relative? and I take a deep interest in you. I know you have a very kind heart. Listen to me, my cousin. I am, after all

an experienced woman ; I will not speak empty words. Pardon—pardon your wife.” Marie Dmitrievna’s eyes were suddenly filled with tears. “ Reflect—youth, inexperience, and, it may be, an evil example—she had not such a mother as would set her in the right way. Forgive her, Theodore Ivanitch ; she has been sufficiently punished.”

Tears were trickling down Marie Dmitrievna’s cheeks. She did not dry them ; she loved to cry.

Lavretski sat as if on pins. “ My God,” he thought, “ why this torture ? Why such a day as to-day ? ”

“ You do not answer,” began Marie Dmitrievna again. “ What must I understand ? Impossible that you can be so harsh ! No, I do not want to believe that ; I feel that my words have convinced you. Theodore Ivanitch, God will reward you for your kindness ; take your wife from my hands now”

Lavretski involuntarily rose up from his chair. Marie Dmitrievna also stood, and going hastily behind a screen, returned

leading Barbara Paulovna, pale, half-dead, her eyes cast down. It seemed as if she had renounced every thought and every wish of her own, and had surrendered herself into the hands of Marie Dmitrievna.

Lavretski drew back a step.

"You were here!" he cried.

"Do not blame her," said Marie Dmitrievna hastily. "She did not for anything wish to stop, but I ordered her to remain. I seated her behind the screen; she assured me it would make you still more angry. I would not listen to her; I know you better than she does; accept your wife from my hands. Barbara, have no fear; fall down before your husband" (she pulled her arm)—"and my blessing"

"Stop! Marie Dmitrievna," broke in Lavretski, with a dull, yet agitated voice. "You, probably, love sentimental scenes" (Lavretski was not mistaken—Marie Dmitrievna had preserved since her schooldays a passion for theatricals); "they amuse you, but they fit others badly. However, it is not with you I will speak; you are not the

chief instigator of this scene. What do *you* want of me, madam?" he added, turning to his wife. "Have I not done for you all I am able? Do not tell me that it was not you who contrived this scene. I shall not believe you, and you know I am not able to believe you. You are intelligent, you do nothing without some intent; you ought to understand that I am in no state to live with you as I formerly lived; not that I am angry with you, but that I have become another man. I told you this on the day following your return, and you yourself at that moment agreed with me in your soul. But you wish to set yourself up in public opinion. It is little for you to live in my house; you want to live with me under one roof—is not that so?"

"I wish you to forgive me," said Barbara Paulovna without raising her eyes.

"She wishes you to forgive her," repeated Marie Dmitrievna.

"And not for myself, but for Ada," whispered Barbara Paulovna.

"Not for herself—for your Ada," repeated Marie Dmitrievna.

“Excellent : you wish this?” said Lavretski with an effort. “Be it so ; I agree to it.”

Barbara Paulovna threw a swift glance at him, and Marie Dmitrievna cried “Thank God,” and again pulled Barbara Paulovna’s arm. “Take her now from me——”

“Stop ! I will tell you,” interrupted Lavretski. “I agree to live with you, Barbara Paulovna,” continued he—“that is, I will accompany you to Lavreek and will reside with you in so far as my strength suffices ; then I will go away—and I will come to see you. You see I do not wish to deceive you ; and do not demand anything more of me. You yourself would laugh if I were to fulfil the wish of our respected relative, and press you to my heart, and begin to assure you that . . . that the past had not been, that the felled tree would again blossom. But I understand now, it is necessary to submit : you will not understand that word—but that is of no moment. I repeat, I will reside with you . . . or no, I cannot promise that. I will come to an arrangement with you, I will again acknowledge you as my wife.”

"Give her at least your hand on that," murmured Marie Dmitrievna, whose tears had long since dried.

"Up till now I have not deceived Barbara Paulovna," replied Lavretski; "she will believe me thus. I will accompany her to Lavreek; and remember, Barbara Paulovna, our agreement will be broken the moment you leave Lavreek. And now allow me to depart." He bowed to both ladies and hastily quitted the room.

"You will not take her with you?" Marie Dmitrievna called after him.

"Let him go," whispered Barbara Paulovna, and at the same time embraced her, began to thank her, to kiss her hands and to call Marie Dmitrievna her saviour.

Marie Dmitrievna accepted her caresses condescendingly, and in her soul was dissatisfied with Lavretski, Barbara Paulovna, and the scene prepared by her; too little feeling was shown. Barbara Paulovna in her opinion should have thrown herself at the feet of her husband.

"How was it you did not understand

me?" argued she ; " did I not say to you, fall down ? "

" It was better so, dear aunt ; do not agitate yourself—all is excellent," Barbara Paulovna assured her.

" Yes, and he . . . cold as ice," remarked Marie Dmitrievna. " But you did not weep, yet I wept before him. He wishes to shut you up at Lavreek ; it will even be impossible for you to come to me ! All men are without feelings," said she in conclusion, and significantly nodded her head.

" That is why women know how to value kindness and nobleness," murmured Barbara Paulovna ; and sinking silently on to her knees before Marie Dmitrievna, she put her arms round her ample figure and pressed her face to her bosom. That face was smiling slyly, whilst the tears were again trickling down the cheeks of Marie Dmitrievna.

Lavretski returned to the house, shut himself in the butler's room and threw himself down on the sofa, where he remained till the morning.

CHAPTER XLIV

THE following day was Sunday. Lavretski had not closed his eyes the whole night, so the sound of the bells calling to early Mass did not wake him; but he remembered the other Sunday, when by the wish of Leeza he had gone to the church. He rose up hastily; some secret voice whispered to him that he would see her there to-day again. Noiselessly he left the house, giving an order that Barbara Paulovna, who still slept, be told that he would return to dine; and with long strides set out thither, whither the changelessly sad sound was calling him.

He came to the church early; it was almost empty. The deacon in the choir was reading prayers; his voice droned measuredly, now falling, now swelling, occasionally interrupted by a cough.

Lavretski stood near the entrance. Wor-

shippers came in one by one, stood for a moment, crossed themselves and bowed to every shrine; their footfalls rang in the silence, through the empty church, echoing clearly under the arches. A feeble old woman in a well-worn cloak and hood was on her knees beside Lavretski, praying earnestly; her toothless, yellow, wrinkled face expressed deep emotion, her reddened eyes were looking steadfastly upwards at the figures on the screen before the altar, her bony hand came out repeatedly from under her cloak and she crossed herself slowly and impressively, with deep and wide movements. A peasant with a thick beard, shaggy and tangled, and a sad face, entered the church; he at once knelt down and began to cross himself, throwing backward and shaking his head after each obeisance. His face and every movement told of so bitter a grief that Lavretski decided to go to him and to ask what afflicted him: the moujik drew himself back awkwardly and timidly, looked at him, then said, speaking shortly, "My son is dead," and anew began to bow and to cross himself.

“For them,” thought Lavrétski, “what consolation can displace the church?” And he himself tried to pray, but his heart became heavier and harder and his thoughts wandered far away. He was awaiting Leeza, but she did not come. The church had become crowded with people, and still she was not there. Mass had begun, the deacon was already reading the Evangel, the bell began to ring for the celebration. Lavretski moved forward a little—and suddenly he saw Leeza. She had come earlier than he; kneeling in a small opening between the choir and the wall he had not noticed her. She did not look round, did not move.

Lavretski did not take his eyes from her till Mass was done; he was bidding her farewell. The people began to go away; it seemed as if she were awaiting the going of Lavretski. At last she crossed herself for the last time, and went away without looking round, with the housemaid who accompanied her.

Lavretski followed her out of the church and overtook her in the street. She went

hurriedly, her head bent, her veil drawn over her face.

“How do you do, Elizabeth Mikaelovna?” said Lavretski loudly, with forced calmness. “May I walk with you?”

Leeza said nothing, and he walked on at her side.

“Are you content with me?” he asked, lowering his voice; “you have heard what happened yesterday?”

“Yes, yes,” she said in a whisper; “that is well.” And they went still more quickly.

“Are you satisfied?”

Leeza only nodded her head.

“Theodore Ivanitch,” she began in a calm but feeble voice, “I wish to ask you, do not come any more to us; go away as soon as possible; we shall be able to see one another afterwards—some time, in a year. But now you will do this for me; fulfil this prayer for God’s sake.”

“I am ready to obey you in all things, Elizabeth Mikaelovna; but can it be that we must separate thus, can it be that you will not say one word to me?”

"Theodore Ivanitch, you are here now by my side, yet already you are so distant from me, and not you alone, but——"

"Speak, I beseech you," cried Lavretski, "what did you wish to say?"

"You will hear, perhaps . . . but, be whatever may be, forget . . . no, do not forget me, let me be in your memory."

"I, forget you! . . ."

"Enough, farewell: go no farther with me."

"Leeza . . ." Lavretski began to say.

"Farewell, farewell," she repeated, drawing her veil still lower, and almost running, hurried forward.

Lavretski followed her with his eyes, then bowing his head walked back along the street, and almost into Lemm, who also went, his hat pulled over his nose, looking down at his feet.

They silently looked at one another.

"Well, what do you say?" muttered Lavretski at last.

"What do I say?" replied Lemm sadly. "I say nothing; all is dead, and we are dead. You go to the right?"

“ To the right.”

“ And I to the left. Good-bye.”

On the following day Lavretski set out for Lavreok with his wife. She went before, in the carriage with Ada and Justine ; he behind in the tarantass. For the whole of the journey the pretty little girl did not leave the window of the carriage ; everything to her was wonderful—the moujiks, the old women, the wells, the tall arched yoke with its little bells worn by the horses, the immense number of rooks ; and her wonder was shared by Justine. Barbara Paulovna laughed at their remarks and exclamations ; she was in high spirits. Before leaving the town of O—— she had an explanation with her husband. “ I understand your position,” she had said, and by the expression in her intelligent eyes he was able to conclude that she understood everything, “ but give me only such fairness that I may live easily. I do not wish to tie you down, to interfere with you ; I wish to assure the future of Ada—I require nothing more.”

“And you have attained your object,” said Theodore Ivanitch.

“I dream of only one thing now—to shut myself away in the depths. I shall ever remember your mercy——”

“Enough,” interrupted Lavretski.

“And I shall know how to respect your independence and your peace,” she added, this phrase having been prepared beforehand.

Lavretski bowed to her deeply, and Barbara Paulovna understood that in his soul he thanked her.

On the second day, towards evening, they reached Lavreik. A week later Lavretski set out for Moscow, leaving five thousand roubles with his wife for her expenditure.

And on the day following the departure of Lavretski, Panshin appeared, of whom Barbara Paulovna had asked that he would not forget her in her loneliness. None could be better received than she received him, and till late in the night the high rooms of the house, and the garden itself,

resounded with songs, music, and gay French phrases.

Panshin was the guest of Barbara Paulovna for three days ; and when saying good-bye to her, he ardently pressed her beautiful hands and promised to return to Lavreek very soon—and fulfilled his promise.

CHAPTER XLV

LEEZA'S room in the house of her mother was a not very large room on the first floor, white and bright, with its small white bed, and writing-table, with pots of flowers in the corners and before the window, a shelf with books, and a crucifix on the wall. This room was called "the nursery," and in it Leeza was born.

When she returned from the church where she had seen Lavretski, she put everything in order with more than usual care, dusted everything, examined all her note-books and letters from friends, and tied them up with ribbon, shut all the drawers, and watered the flowers, touching each blossom with her fingers caressingly. All this she did without haste, without noise, with a look of tender and quiet anxiety on her face. At last she stood in the middle of the room, looked slowly

round, and going to the table above which hung the crucifix, she sank on to her knees, laid her head on her clasped hands, and remained motionless.

Martha Timofaievna entered and found her in this position. Leeza did not notice her entrance. The old lady went out again on the tips of her toes and coughed loudly several times outside the door. Leeza rose up hastily and wiped her eyes, in which were shining bright unshed tears.

"I see thou hast again arranged thy little cell," murmured Martha Timofaievna as she bent low over a young rose; "how deliciously it smells."

Leeza looked thoughtfully at her aunt.

"What word was that you uttered?" whispered she.

"What word? which?" said the old lady sharply; "what dost thou wish to say? This is terrible," she cried, throwing off her cap and seating herself on Leeza's bed; "it is more than I can bear; it is to-day the fourth day that I am boiling as if in a cauldron. I can no longer pretend that

I do not notice anything ; I cannot watch thee growing pale, shrinking, weeping—I cannot, I cannot !”

“What is the matter, aunt dear ?” said Leeza ; “there is nothing——”

“Nothing !” cried Martha Timofaievna ; “tell that to another, not to me. Nothing ! and who just now was kneeling ? whose eye-lashes are still moist with tears ? nothing ! Yes, look at thyself : what hast thou done to thy face ? where have thine eyes hidden themselves ? Nothing ! Is it possible I do not know all ?”

“It will pass, dear aunt ; give it time.”

“Pass ! and when ? O Lord God, my Master ! Is it possible thou lovest him so, and he is an old man, Leezotchka ? But I will not dispute it, he is a good man, bites no one. But what of that ? we are all good people ; the world is wide enough for all, and there will always be much of this goodness.”

“I tell you all this will pass—all this has already passed.”

“Listen, Leezotchka, to what I will tell

you," said Martha Timofaievna suddenly, seating Leeza beside her on the bed, and arranging now her hair, then her neckerchief: "that it is impossible to relieve thy grief only seems to thee so overwhelming, but, dear heart, it is from death alone that there is no escape! Say but to thyself, 'I will not submit to it,' and thou thyself afterwards wilt be astonished how soon it will pass quite away. Have but patience."

"Dear aunt," replied Leeza, "it has already passed—all has passed away."

"Passed? how passed? Here is thy little nose even has become sharp, and thou sayest it has passed!"

"Yes, passed, auntie, if you will but help me," said Leeza with sudden animation as she put her arms round Martha Timofaievna's neck. "Dear aunt, be my friend, help me; do not be angry—understand me."

"And what is it? what is it, little woman? Do not frighten me, if you please; I shall at once scream! Do not look at me so! Say quickly, what is it?"

"I—I want . . ."—Leeza hid her face on

Martha Timofaievna's bosom—"I want to go into a convent," said she in a low voice.

The old lady bounced from the bed.

"Cross thyself, dear woman, Leezotchka! know thyself! What doest thou? . . . God be with thee!" she said brokenly at last. "Lie down, my darling; sleep a little; this all comes from sleeplessness, dear heart."

Leeza raised her head; her cheeks were burning.

"No, dear aunt," she said, "do not speak thus. I have decided, I have prayed, I have asked counsel of God; all is ended, my life with you is finished. Such a lesson was not without purpose. And it is not for the first time I think of this. Happiness came not to me; even when I had the hope of happiness, my heart drew back. I know all, and my own sins, and the sins I am without, and how father amassed wealth; I know all. All this to expiate, prayer is needful. It pains me to leave you, to leave mother and Lena, but there is nothing other to be done. I feel that my life is not here; I have already bid adieu to all, saluted everything in the

house for the last time. Something calls me elsewhere ; it wearies me ; I want to shut myself away for ever. Do not hold me, do not persuade me ; help me, otherwise I must go alone."

Martha Timofaievna in awe listened to her niece. "She is ill, she is wandering," thought she ; "it is necessary to send for the doctor. And for what doctor ? Gideonovski recently praised some one ; he always lies, but perhaps this time he was speaking the truth."

But when she was convinced that Leeza was not ill, not wandering—when to all her objections Leeza constantly replied with one and the same answer—Martha Timofaievna was seriously frightened and saddened. "But thou dost not know, my dear one," said she, beginning to persuade her, "what life this is in a convent. They will feed thee, my cherished one, with green hemp oil ; clothe thee with the coarsest of coarse cotton cloth ; send thee out into the cold ; and thou wilt not endure all this, Leezotchka. All this is the traces of Agafa in thee ; it was she upset

thy mind. But she began first to live; she lived for her own pleasure; live thou also. Let me at least die peacefully, then do as thou wilt. But who is accustomed to see this, that for such a reason—for a goat's-beard, Lord forgive me! for a man—to go into a convent? But if thou art weary of it, collect thyself, pray to the saints, cause a *Te Deum* to be sung, but do not put the black bonnet on thy head, little woman of mine," and Martha Timofaievna wept bitterly.

Leeza calmed her, wiped away her tears; herself wept, but remained unshaken. In desperation, Martha Timofaievna tried to make use of threats, to tell all to her mother; but even this did not help. Only, consequent on the most pressing supplications of the old lady, Leeza agreed to put off for six months the fulfilment of her resolution; and for this Martha Timofaievna was bound to give her word that she herself would help her to obtain the consent of Marie Dmitrievna, if in the course of those six months Leeza did not abandon her design.

.

With the approach of the first signs of winter Barbara Paulovna, disregarding her promise to shut herself in the depths, having supplied herself with money, transported herself to Petersburg, where she had engaged a modest yet pretty residence, which was found for her by Panshin, who had already quitted the government of O——. During the latter part of his sojourn in the town of O—— he quite withdrew himself from the disposition of Marie Dmitrievna; he ceased suddenly to visit her, and hardly ever left Lavreek. Barbara Paulovna had enslaved him—exactly enslaved—it is impossible to express with any other word her unbounded, irrevocable, unquestioned authority over him.

Lavretski passed the winter in Moscow, and in the spring of the following year news reached him that Leeza had taken the veil in the B——m Convent, near one of the most distant boundaries of Russia.

EPILOGUE

EIGHT years passed away ; again the spring was approaching. But we will say first a few words concerning the fates of Mikaelaivitch, Panshin, and Mrs. Lavretska, and leave them.

Mikaelaivitch, after long wanderings, at last came upon his real occupation. He received an appointment as senior overseer in a government training-school. He was very satisfied with his lot ; and although the pupils tease him, they worship him.

Panshin moved rapidly upwards, step by step, and already holds the position of a chief. He walks slightly bent, and it must be the Cross of Vladimir conferred upon him which, hanging round his neck, drags him forward. The official in him has decidedly outweighed the artist ; his still young-looking face has grown yellow, his hair has become thinner, and he does not now sing or sketch ;

but in secret he occupies himself with literature ; he has written a comedietta like "*Proverbs*"—and as now every scribbler wishes to expose somebody or something, he also exposed in it a coquette, and reads it in private to two or three ladies who are well disposed towards him. Strange to say, he has never married, although many excellent chances for it have offered themselves ; for this Barbara Paulovna is to blame.

This lady, as formerly, constantly lives in Paris ; Theodore Ivanitch gave her a bill on himself, and freed himself from her and from the possibility of a second unexpected meeting. She has grown older and stouter, but is still quite pretty and elegant. Every one has his own ideal ; Barbara Paulovna has found hers in the dramatic productions of the younger Dumas. She diligently visits the theatre, where consumptive, sentimental Camelias are brought on to the stage, and to be Madame Doche seems to her to be the summit of human happiness. She once remarked that she did not desire a better portion for her daughter. One must hope that destiny will

deliver Mademoiselle Ada from such happiness. From a dark, puffy child Ada has been transformed into a weak-chested, pale young girl, her nerves already unstrung.

The number of Barbara Paulovna's adorers has grown smaller, but they are not exterminated; she will probably retain a few till the end of her life. The most ardent of these at the latter time was a certain Zakoordalo-Skroobirinkoff—a retired guardsman, a man of thirty-eight, of unusually powerful build: the French frequenters of the salon of Mrs. Lavretska called him “the great Ukrainian bull.” Barbara Paulovna never invites him to her fashionable receptions, but he enjoys her good-will completely.

And thus eight years passed. Again the radiant happiness of Spring was breathed from heaven, again she smiled on the earth and on the people, again under her caress all things began to blossom, to love and to sing.

The town of O—— was little changed in the course of those eight years; but the house of Marie Dmitrievna seemed to have

grown younger. Its recently painted walls were invitingly white, and the panes of the open windows glowed and gleamed under the setting sun. Through those windows there was borne into the street the light, glad sounds of young ringing voices and continual laughter. The whole house seemed to bubble with life, and gaiety overflowed its boundaries. The mistress of the house had long since gone into the grave ; only two years had passed since Leeza took the veil, when Marie Dmitrievna died, and Martha Timofaievna did not long outlive her niece—they are at rest side by side in the town graveyard. Nastasia Karpovna had ceased to be ; the faithful old woman went every week for several years to pray over the dust of her friends. . . . The time came when her bones were also laid in the moist earth.

But the house of Marie Dmitrievna did not pass into strange hands, did not go out of the family ; the nest was not broken up. Lena was transformed into a well-built, handsome young woman, and her betrothed was a fair-haired young hussar officer. Marie

Dmitrievna's son had but just been married in Petersburg, and with his young wife had come to spend the spring in O——; the sister of his wife, a schoolgirl of sixteen with glowing cheeks and clear eyes ; Shoorotchka also grown up and become prettier—those were the young people with whose voices and laughter the walls of Kaleetin House resounded. Everything in it was changed, everything had become suitable to the new tenants. Beardless children of the soil, full of jokes and tricks, had replaced the serious old servants ; there, where at one time the fattening Roski had walked importantly to and fro, now two setters were behaving themselves madly and springing on to the divans ; in the stables, lean trotters, swift and spirited carriage-horses with plaited manes, and saddle-horses from the Don steppes, were growing in number ; the hours for luncheon, dinner and supper had become tangled and mingled ; everything went, to use the expression of the neighbours, “in unheard-of disorder.”

On that same evening about which we

have been speaking, the tenants of Kaleetin House (the eldest of whom, Lena's betrothed, was only twenty-four) were occupied with a not complicated, but judging by the friendly peals of laughter, extremely amusing game. They were running through the rooms catching one another ; the dogs were also running and barking, and the canaries in their cages hanging before the windows were bursting their throats with envy, increasing the general hubbub with the ringing trills of their impetuous warbling.

In the very heat of this deafening amusement a mud-splashed tarantass drove up to the entrance, and a man of forty-five, in travelling costume, descended from it and stood in astonishment. He stood motionless for some time, gazing intently at the house ; then passed through the gateway into the court, and slowly mounted the steps. No one met him at the entrance, but the door of the drawing-room was opened quickly, and from it, all red with exertion, Shoorotchka sprang, and in an instant in pursuit of her came, with ringing laughter, the whole of

that young company. She stopped suddenly and silently at the appearance of a stranger, but her bright eyes were fixed intently upon him, and looked just as kindly as of old. The fresh young faces did not cease to laugh, and Marie Dmitrievna's son approached the visitor and asked him politely what was his pleasure?

"I am Lavretski," said the visitor.

Friendly cries greeted him as an answer. Not because all these young people were so overjoyed by the arrival of a distant and almost forgotten relative, but just because they were ready to make a noise and to rejoice on every convenient occasion. They at once surrounded Lavretski. Lena, as his oldest acquaintance, named herself, and assured him that with a little more time she would certainly have recognised him; and she presented the rest of the company, naming each one, even her own betrothed, by their shortened names, and the whole crowd passed through the dining-room into the reception-room. There were other wall-papers in both these rooms, but the furniture remained un-

touched. Lavretski recognised the piano; and even the embroidery frame by the window stood in the same position, and possibly held that same unfinished work as eight years ago. They seated him in Marie Dmitrievna's chair, and themselves quietly about him, and questions, exclamations, and explanations were heard on all sides.

"It is long since we saw you," said Lena naïvely, "and Barbara Paulovna we have not seen also."

"How could it be?" hastily added her brother. "I took thee to Petersburg, and Theodore Ivanitch was living in the country."

"Yes; since that time mother has gone."

"And Martha Timofaievna," said Shoo-rothka.

"And Nastasia Karpovna," rejoined Lena, "and Monsieur Lemm."

"What! and Lemm is dead?" asked Lavretski.

"Yes," replied young Kaleetin; "he went from here to Odessa, some one attracted him thither, and there he died."

"You do not know if any of his music remained?"

"I do not know, but I should not think so."

All were silent and looked at one another; the shadow of sadness passed across all the young faces.

"'Sailor' is alive," said Lena suddenly.

"And Gideonovski," added her brother.

And at the name of Gideonovski a friendly laugh at once broke out.

"Yes, he is alive, and lies as of old," continued Marie Dmitrievna's son; "and, imagine it, this romp" (he indicated the schoolgirl, his wife's sister) "sprinkled some pepper in his snuff-box yesterday."

"How he sneezed!" cried Lena, and unrestrained laughter rang out afresh.

"We had news of Leeza not long ago," said her brother, and again silence fell on the circle. "She is doing well; her health has begun to improve now."

"She is still in that same convent?" asked Lavretski, not without an effort.

"Always the same,"

“ Does she write to you ? ”

“ No, never; news comes to us through others.”

A sudden silence again fell upon all. “ That is the silent angel passing over,” they thought.

“ Would you like to go into the garden ? ” said Kaleetin, turning to Lavretski ; “ it is very nice now, although we have let it run wild a little.”

Lavretski went out into the garden, and the first thing that met his gaze was that same seat on which he once passed those few happy, never-to-be-repeated moments with Leeza. It had become dark and twisted, but he recognised it, and that feeling flooded his soul to which, for sweetness and sadness, there is no equal—the memory of the happiness which had once been his, and of his vanished youth.

Together with the young people he walked along the avenues. The lime trees had aged and grown a little during those eight years, and the shade had become deeper ; all the bushes had risen higher, and the raspberry canes were growing luxuriantly ; the nut

bushes had grown together densely, and from all around came the scent of fresh moss, trees, freshly cut grass, and lilac.

“How merrily we might play Four Corners here!” suddenly cried Lena, approaching a small green lawn surrounded by lime trees, “and we are just five.”

“And Theodore Ivanitch thou hast forgotten,” remarked her brother, “or thou didst not count thyself?”

Lena blushed slightly.

“But is it possible Theodore Ivanitch at his age is able to——” she began.

“Play, if you please,” broke in Lavretski hastily; “pay no attention to me. I shall be glad when I know that I do not hinder you; do not feel uneasy about me: our brother, the old man, has an occupation which you cannot yet suspect, and of which no amusement can take the place: Memories.”

The young people listened to Lavretski with polite but almost amused respect, as if to a teacher giving a lesson; then suddenly they were scattered over the lawn,

and he was left alone ; four of the young people posted themselves by four of the trees, one stood in the middle, and the enjoyment began.

Lavretski returned slowly to the house, entered the dining-room, went up to the piano and touched one of the keys. It gave forth a weak but clear note, and his heart trembled : it was the note with which that inspired melody began, which long ago, on that same happy night, had so enraptured him, when played by Lemm, now dead.

Afterwards Lavretski passed into the drawing-room, and remained for a long time there. In this room, where he had so often seen Leeza, her image rose before him more clearly ; it seemed to him that he could feel around him traces of her presence, but the sadness in the feeling was heavy, all but overwhelming ; the peace which death brings was not in it. Leeza still lived somewhere ; dimly, distantly, he thought of her as of one living, and did not recognise the woman he once loved

in any indistinct, pale apparition, garbed as a nun, and enveloped by smoky waves from burning incense. Lavretski would not have known himself, if he could have looked at himself as in his thoughts he looked at Leeza. In the course of those eight years the irruption into his life had at last taken place—that irruption which many do not experience, and without which it is impossible to remain a self-respecting man to the end. He had ceased to think of his own happiness, of purposes advantageous to himself. He had found peace, and—why hide the truth?—had grown old not only in the face and body but also in his soul: to keep to old age a young heart, as some say, is difficult and even almost ridiculous. That man may be quite satisfied who has not lost steadfastness of mind, the desire to be up and doing, and faith in kindness. Lavretski had the right to be content; he had really made of himself a good master, he had really taught himself to plough the land, and he laboured not for himself alone—he secured and

strengthened, so much as he was able, the well-being of his own peasants.

Lavretski came out of the house into the garden, seated himself on the well-known bench; and before that house, on that cherished spot, where he had in vain and for the last time put out his hand towards the sacred bowl in which bubbles and dances the golden wine of pleasure, he—a lonely, homeless wanderer, to the sound of the merry cries that reached him from the younger generation which was already taking his place—glanced back on his own life. His heart became sad, yet not heavy nor discontented; of what to regret—there was; of what to be ashamed—nothing.

“Play on, young forces, be merry, grow up,” he thought, and there was no bitterness in his mind. “Your life is before you, and it will be easier for you to live. You may not have, as we had, to seek out your own road, to struggle, to fall and to rise again in the darkness; we anxiously toiled to achieve our purpose, and how

many of us have achieved nothing?—but it will be necessary that you do something. You must work—and the blessing of the old man, your brother, will be with you ; and for me after to-day, after these emotions, it but remains to render you my last salute, and although with sadness, yet without envy, without any dark feelings ; and to say, in view of the end, in view of the awaiting God, “ Welcome, lonely old age ; burn out, unprofitable life.”

Lavretski quietly rose and silently went away. No one tried to keep him, no one noticed him ; louder than before the merry cries rang out in the garden from behind the dense green wall of tall lime trees. He seated himself in the tarantass and told the coachman to drive away without urging the horses.

And the end ? it may be, the unsatisfied reader will demand. And what afterwards became of Lavretski ? of Leeza ?

Yet what can be said of those who, whilst still living, have renounced all worldly

careers? They say Lavretski visited that distant convent whither Leeza fled—that he saw her. Going from chapel to chapel she passed near by the spot on which he stood; she passed without looking at him, with the gliding, hastening yet tranquil step of a nun; but the lashes of her eyes trembled slightly, the wan face bowed a little lower yet, and the fingers of the clasped hands, round which her rosary was twined, gripped yet more closely one another.

What did they think? what did they feel? Who can know? who will tell? In life there are such moments, such feelings, to which it is but possible to point, and to pass on.

KÖNYEÉZ



21256

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



A 000 675 286 9

